

THE  
CHINESE SPY;

OR,

EMISSARY from the Court of  
P E K I N,

Commissioned to examine into  
THE PRESENT STATE OF EUROPE.

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Translated from the CHINESE.

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In SIX VOLUMES.

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VOL. VI.

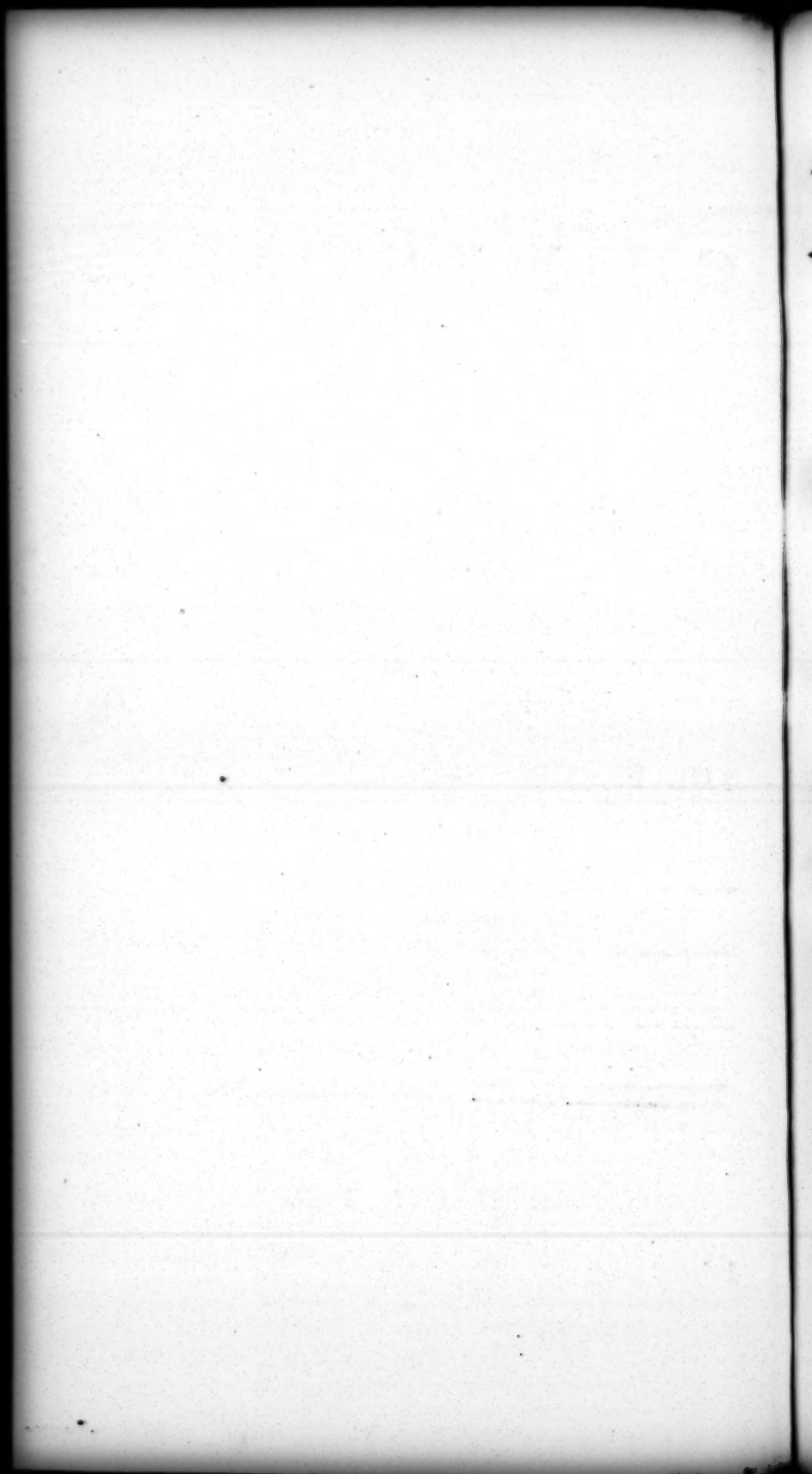
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# THE CHINESE SPY.

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## LETTER I

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kie-tou-na, at Peking.*

London.

**W**HEN I was perusing the history of the great warriors of Europe, I thought that to be a hero required vast endowments ; but it is the easiest thing in the world : I will tell thee how it is done.

The command of two hundred thousand men is given to some person of note, who is called a general, and with orders to go and fall upon such a nation. These fighters are completely armed, and naturally long to come to blows with the enemy ; but the officers are still more eager. The general leads them to the field of battle, and after telling them to do their best, and ordering his aids-de-camp to come and bring him word after the action, who has got the better, he himself withdraws.

When a strong city is to be besieged, he sends for the chief engineer, to know how many men must be sacrificed in carrying the place. The engineer falls to calculating, and gives the general an account of the dead which often comes to fifteen or twenty thousand.

Well,

Well, the siege is begun, the twenty thousand men are knocked on the head, and the town is taken. In the mean time the general, who is sure of his point, draws up a capitulation ; and that is all he does in the matter.

Indeed he is not always inactive ; for he keeps going and coming, camping and decamping. If the enemy is weak, he advances ; when too strong, he retreats : at quitting his post, if he thinks the enemy may subsist there, he lays waste the country : if in any new post subsistences grow short, he lays the country under contribution ; and, if these be not brought in accordingly, he hangs up the chief men of the towns which were to have furnished their quotas.

He has general officers under him, who discharge all the troublesome part, and make their report to him : spies bring him advice of the different motions of the enemy, and he takes his measures accordingly : when the campaign is over, he puts his troops into quarters, and repairs to court to give the king an account of his operations ; thence he hastens to the capital to be huzzad by the mob, and idolized by those who know nothing of the matter. Couldst thou ever have imagined that it was so easy to be a general ?

All those illustrious commanders seem possessed of some preservative against powder and ball ; for, after thirty sieges and twenty battles, they shall die in their beds. One is carried off by the gout, another by the gravel ; the cholic finishes this general, that expires under a diarrhoea : afterwards they are laid in stately mausoleums, as eternal monuments of the nation's glory.

## LETTER II.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Sin-ho-ci.*

London.

**I** Do not see that the knowledge which the western people make such boast of, is worth an Asiatic's taking a journey to the other pole. They have been at infinite pains in arranging millions of words into books, and these words they dignify with the appellation of sciences.

Oratory only seduces the mind, instead of convincing it; poetry has vitiated the imagination: metaphysics has not removed the veil which shrouds the Deity; philosophy has filled the world with errors; physics have not made us acquainted with the formation of the universe; natural history has scarce got sight of nature, the theory of mathematics does not agree with its principles; astronomy has taught no farther than the motion of the heavenly bodies: history is little more than so many fictions; chronology leads to doubting of every thing; medicine has brought pains and sufferings on human nature, which it knew nothing of before this art came to be made a science, &c. &c.

On most of these subjects I shall enlarge in the sequel of our correspondence.

## LETTER III.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kie-tou-na, at Peking.*

London.

**T**HE principal science of Europeans consists only of sounds, and is accordingly called eloquence, or the art of speaking: all that its professors, who are skilled orators, have to do, is to open the mouth and pronounce: no manner of wit is required to be an orator, and sometimes genius even does harm. This  
art

art has not the least connexion with the intellects ; it resides on the lips : an automaton uttering words might be made an orator.

The Europeans, being naturally loquacious, and spending great part of their life in talking together, could not fail of making a rapid progress in this science. The orator's capital quality is to agitate the air agreeably, and sooth the ear by his modulations. Yet is this science not without its inconveniencies, particularly that the same expression does not always affect alike : a speech, which at one time draws tears, at another raises laughter.

The model of all the European orators is an old babler, called Demosthenes : their study is to speak in his manner ; but, the critics will have it, that the tongues of the modern speakers are not so voluble.

Eloquence has often been censured as a delusory art, tending rather to seduce the human mind, than to cure it of its errors. Orators have been banished, and sometimes even branded with ignominy ; but a fondness for speaking, being the prevailing passion in the Europeans, soon brought them again into vogue.

Oratory is divided into several branches, all aiming at the same scope, persuasion ; and different orators have their different kinds of elocution. The effect of the pathetic is to melt ; of the vehement, to stir ; of the nervous, to master the imagination.

Some orators are very long winded, others are silent. According to connoisseurs, the *fort* of the oratorical art is the laying aside speech, and expressing one's self without saying any thing : and this is what in the rhetorician's phraseology is called eloquent silence : if so, mutes may be great orators.

I was in the wrong to say that no genius is required to be an orator, really it requires a great deal ; for, though little will do to talk on something, there must be abilities to hold forth three hours on nothing ; and herein lies the great merit of the European orators.

## LETTER IV.

*The Same, to the Same, at Pekin.*

London.

**M**EN, not satisfied with plain speaking, set up rhyming ; and, as if speech was not sufficiently restrained by laws, it was farther cramped by metre ; genius was put to the torture, and imagination confined to a measure so strict, that good sense often suffered by it.

Reason had feet set to it, and was obliged to move in cadence. Some go so far as to say that common talk was not invented till afterwards, and that men spoke in verse before they used prose. Now this would be a double frenzy in the human mind, running mad before it had so much as thought.

Poetry polished the imagination ; it in some measure gave a form to the mind : the poets sometimes expressed their ideas under the figure of an altar, an ox, a pigeon's egg, &c. &c.

Poetical excellence requires such a compass of genius, that nature very seldom makes the effort ; and in the most favoured countries, excellent poets have been very rare. Its two principal qualities are enthusiasm, and a delirious turn of mind, which produces the poetic rage, and this, to give it its true appellation, is nothing but a distempered imagination.

The rhymers belong to a district called Parnassus ; some barren uncultivated country, I suppose ; for most of them are starving above-ground.

This art the Europeans turn to great conveniency ; for without it people would not be so easily corrupted. Every obscene, impious, and indecent description their writers are sure to put down in verse ; unquestionably, to the end that it make the deeper impression, and be the better remembered. This immorality is here softened with the appellation of poetical licence.

The



The founder of poetry was a poor blind fellow, who versified above two thousand years ago; and in his own time he was so little valued, that no-body took the trouble of asking him of what country he was. Thus it is not exactly known from whence poetry drew its origin.

Homer, for that was the blind man's name, is accounted the very model of versification; but what signifies such a model, when most of the Europeans maintain it to be inimitable? However, it was not for nothing this blind songster came into the world, his birth having convinced the modern naturalists, that nature, in the great effort of his formation, had so strained herself, that she has not since been able to produce his equal. Thou canst not conceive what lofty ideas the Europeans entertain of him; their veneration is little short of idolatry.

You may here safely arraign the Deity himself; but beware how you touch on the Iliad!

I learn Greek, purely for the sake of reading this poet. In some places he is indeed sublime, and in others I think him quite low: in his excellencies he comes up to the very Gods, and where he fails, he is beneath men.

## LETTER V.

*The Same, to the Same, at Pekin.*

London:

**M**ETAPHYSICS have not taught the Europeans the knowledge of God; or rather has, in all times, given rise to the grossest errors. In the ages of darkness, as they are called, men usually mistook the effect for the cause; they worshipped the sun, the moon, and the stars, in lieu of him by whom they were created.

From thence they proceeded to animals; there was not a nation which had not some beast for its God: afterwards they came down to plants; and radishes themselves once made a very considerable figure among the

the celestial powers: worms were likewise deified. As for making the caterpillar a God, that may be overlooked; an insect is still an existent being: but non-entity itself was deified.

What exceeds all, they tumbled the Gods into hell, and the devils were placed in heaven.

The celestial Deities became excessively multiplied, so that in some nations there were as many Gods as men. The wise Romans themselves had thirty thousand; and, if to these be added the Penates, or Household Gods, they will be found very far to out-number the families. But all these Gods were not equal in power, there being only twelve supreme, who ruled both in heaven and earth, the others acted as their agents and delegates. They swarmed so that the houses were full of them: the hinges, doors, locks, and hearths, had their Gods, so that there was no stirring in one's house without treading on Deities.

Most of these celestials, instead of being austere, were very indulgent in their morality, setting men an example of crimes, rather than forbidding them.

At length Christianity appeared, cashiering all the before-mentioned Deities, and reducing them to one God. A new system of metaphysics took place in consequence; but, whether more perspicuous than the former, I cannot say. The nature of this essence is still acknowledged incomprehensible; and thus perhaps little more known than that of the Deities, who were suppressed eighteen hundred years ago.

The Christians know not whether their God sees all things by his prescience, or whether worldly transactions are known to him only successively after they have happened. And I say, that not to know whether God sees, or does not see, whether he knows or does not know, is being ignorant of God's nature.



## LETTER VI.

*The Same, to the Same, at Pekin.*

London.

**H**OWEVER philosophy may be reckoned the mother of all sciences, it is really the source of the worst and absurdest errors.

Concerning this, the Christian tradition is very remarkable: they say, that God, on creating man, imparted to him the most profound knowledge, but that original sin plunged him into the gloomy abyss of ignorance. Thus here is human nature become constitutionally incapable of knowledge.

I shall not lay before thee the clashing opinions of philosophers: this would be undertaking to write a complete treatise on human insanity.

There is nothing in nature so silly, which has not found a philosopher to assert it; some have taught that the Gods are born and die like men; others, that they are originated from the air: some have advanced, that the creation is a consequence of the exhalations of the earth; some, that the Supreme Good is pleasure: some have placed science in knowing nothing; and, according to others, the certainty of knowledge lies in universal doubting.

The origin of philosophy is not known with any certainty, and no matter; for what signifies a science when its discoveries lead to deceptions?

Some learned Europeans will have it to have first drawn breath in Egypt, and its nursing fathers, or professors, to be stiled *Magi*; but these, on becoming philosophers seem to have lost their senses. Some wasted their life, and burned out their eyes, in fixedly viewing the sun; others kept hopping about from morning to night.

The modern professors of this science are not a whit wiser than the antient. European philosophy is no more than vanity reduced to practice, inflating the mind, and  
that

thus strengthening and stimulating the passions. So very far from rectifying, it corrupts the manners.

Its principles are not agreed on; so that it is rather a subject of wrangling, than a mean of acquiring knowledge.

Endeavours have been frequently used for terminating the differences among philosophers; but this negotiation has proved more difficult than those of politics; for princes will sometimes listen to reason, whereas philosophers regard only their passions.

Since the revival of literature, sovereigns have concluded a thousand treaties of peace; whereas we do not hear of so much as one truce among the philosophers.

The names of the leading philosophers of late times are, Galileo, Gassendi, Descartes, Bacon, Hobbes, Boyle: I send them to thee to be entered in the records of Pekin, as the last disturbers of the human mind.

## LETTER VII.

*The Same, to the Same, at Pekin.*

London.

**O**F all studies, physics is that which most lays open the vanity of the human mind. God, on creating the universe, threw a veil over his work; and this science is for rending it. The history of physics is the history of human weakness; for, after six thousand years of close application, it has scarce discovered so much as a nook of nature. The best-verified experiments demonstrate physics to be an occult science: as investigation advances, its boundaries draw back, mocking knowledge; so that the very progresses in it are an obstacle to its improvement.

If some part of physics be incontestable, the whole of it is not to be admitted. Not one of its axioms is peculiar to itself.

For a long time it consisted of words, the meaning of which was not understood. Its favourite terms were, *act, power, specific properties, intrinsic virtues, natural qualities,*

*qualities, substantial forms.* A ready remembrance of certain properties attributed to things constituted a natural philosopher: thus, to explain the effect of knowledge on the mind, they used to say, that the sciences contained the faculty of making a person learned; the elevation of bodies was accounted for by a certain disposition in them to rise; and their gravitation by a certain weight carrying them towards their centre, &c.

Modern philosophers indeed have cleared it from a multitude of absurdities which exposed it to ridicule; but its obscurity is still the same. The primordial qualities attributed to the elements, the direction of motion, the figure of invisible particles, are difficulties which will ever baffle all physical investigations.

Physics are engaged in an imaginary chase; it is for forming new senses, and erecting a second nature, to supply its want of a sufficient knowledge and penetration to explain the first.

Naturalists have not so much as the idea of that very nature of which they pretend to elucidate the effects.

Some say that it is the principle of motion, and of rest; others, that it is a cogitative being: some have undertaken to prove it a blind agent, with all its combinations depending on chance; whilst others have advanced that God and nature were but one and the same thing.

They are no better agreed about the elements; some attributing to water the properties of the general principle; and they affirm, that the sun itself derives its essence from it; which is only saying that fire and water are the same thing.

The most eminent of philosophers, one who is still venerated in Europe as a kind of physical saint, has said that form contains a real substance, and that the figure of bodies has an existence distinct from the existence of matter.

This science, after exercising itself a long time about form, undertook to measure matter; and, by the help of a ladder, of imagination's making, it climbed

climbed into the heavens, calculated the distance of the planets, and weighed all the several bodies. The formation of the world was now no longer a secret. A modern philosopher laid open the construction of the universe, and the materials of it are these.

The first element, as composed of a subtile matter, is no more than dust flying off from the friction of bodies: that of the second element is not so subtile, and with something of a form: the third is composed of the most solid matter, which has best cohered together, amidst the agitations of the universe: of the latter, earth, air, water, &c. &c. are formed.

A disagreeable circumstance in this science is, that it swarms with contradictions, which, instead of improving, must rather mortify the student. The question about a void has stirred up a civil war among the learned, and long have they, with great acrimony wielded the weapons of absurdity. The point was to know whether the universe contained something, or, in other terms, whether the work of the Omnipotent Deity formed only a void.

It was little probable, that infinite wisdom should have drawn the earth from nothing to let it fall into the same state. Heaven's arch had been without a prop, did not the wall, which supports it, bear on something. The spaces themselves, which physics admitted, clashed with a void. For these spaces not to be filled would have been a defect in the formation of the universe: as subjects of calculation, they must contain something; there is no measuring non-entirety; what does not exist, is nothing.

Another source of scholastic broils was motion: whole sects of philosophers not only denied the act, but even pretended to prove the impossibility of motion.

The first philosophers taught, that matter, as blind, performed the general laws of motion casually.

Attraction is another scandal to modern physics: the signification of this term is no better known now than at the time of its invention three thousand years ago; for it does not explain what is meant by the

words *attractive virtue* ; yet has not this difficulty taught philosophers to mistrust their insufficiency.

Though the arch of heaven had been delineated by the antient philosophers, a modern one, Descartes, has exhibited a new scheme of the whole universe ; and, to be sure, the finest it is that imagination ever formed : every piece in the structure of the world it puts in its right place.

His work perhaps had been unexceptionable and perfect, had he confined himself to the mechanical history of heaven ; but he must needs surpass the Deity, inventing elements, forming vortexes, and making himself a second creator. The sun is a work of his, which he incrustates with a subtile matter ; and of this he composes light ; then he proceeds to form the solid and opaque bodies.

It may be objected to this European philosopher, that he has stripped the sun of its heat ; at least, it is inconceivable that from subtile matter should proceed the strongest fire in all nature.

I have read over this Descartes, and find him full of inconsistencies. The violent fondness of the learned for innovations should, in my opinion, make men very much suspect these boasted sciences. In all physical systems the most ponderous bodies had been placed in the centre, and the lightest occupied the surface ; but this modern has turned things upside down, and has disposed the most ponderous on the surface.

This new creation of the universe raised a general emulation ; the speculatists, who till then had minded only earthly things, now extended their investigations to celestial phenomena. The visions of this modern philosopher gave rise to many physical dreams, and the philosophers ever since have done nothing but dream. Some will say, these dreams are all true and real : but that is what I shall not take upon me to decide.

A more modern philosopher has taken Descartes's sun to pieces, and made another of a less subtile matter, to give it the more heat ; thus, if I may be allowed the expression, making the sun to keep a good fire : but he says, that though it be continually burning, it never wastes



wastes in the least. Very right; for, did this heavenly body waste, we should long since have been without any sun. As to the spots which he says are sometimes seen in it, these, it seems, happen only from a conflict between the subtile and compact matter, when the former has the worst of it; but in some of these struggles it gains a complete victory, and then the sun re-assumes all its former splendor.

Let us now proceed to the other branches of physics.

Light shed such a darkness on the philosophers minds, that most of them were perfectly blinded by it. Colours for a long time disturbed the sight of the Europeans: however, some improvements were beginning to be made in this branch of physics: it was already known, that colours could not be seen in the night: this raised a conceit that colours were not in the objects, but only in the reflection of light.

A word was all they were agreed in; and this word wanted explanation. Some would have it to be a reflection from the globules of the second element; others from facets of different dispositions on the superficies of bodies; some, a more or less quick vibration of the rays of light. They were unquestionably running into greater errors, had not one Newton, an Englishman, appeared, and enlightened Europe by means of a glass: he may be said to have given nature a pair of spectacles. This philosopher, to be sure, must have been more keen-sighted than others, having all the light of the world in his head. He turned light into a kind of music, pricking down the colours, and making a luminous Gamut. The notes of the luminous music he reduces to seven principal; orange, red, violet, blue, indigo, and green: the others are only the semi-tones.

This great man, however accounted the luminary of his age, left the light of day as he had found it, saying only where it is, and not what it is. The object of his philosophy was only the mechanism of colours, his labour went no farther than taking the sun to pieces: he dissected its rays, and anatomised day; so that to call him light's

surgeon would be no improper appellation. He observed the principal colours to be equal in number to the principal notes in music; an important observation indeed! it proves the Europeans to see as they sing.

Light has been said to be fire: but what is fire? that is what still remains to be cleared up. After all the discoveries made by the Europeans on the effects of light, luminousness lies shrouded in as thick a gloom as ever; and they themselves dispute whether it be a body or not.

Its passage in reaching the earth is another stumbling-block: they are at a loss how to make it travel so far without being stopped by the way: from the immensity of the distance its pace must be very swift; otherwise it would not be day in Europe till midnight. The rub was, the great number of vortexes it would meet with in its passage; but this difficulty they by some shift or other have got over, as in all other physical problems.

Some philosophers will have light to be communicated by a successive progression: they have even calculated the time that a ray takes up from the sun to the earth, as exactly as the time of a courier's going from London to Paris. It is now universally allowed in physics, that the motion of a ray of light is at the rate of a hundred and thirty thousand leagues in a second, which is six hundred thousand times swifter than sound; this at most going but three hundred leagues in an hour, and, besides, the roads must be clear, and no obstruction by the way.

Philosophers say that in the north its motion is quicker than in the south: to be sure it must be the cold which puts it on its speed.

They now know how many leagues we are from the sun, and of course the time for light to reach the earth. Its degradation has been computed from the different heights of the masses of water and air. It is now known that we should be in continual darkness, were our globe's atmosphere equally dense for a certain number of leagues, as in its proximity to the earth.

After



After these differences about light, the question was, how we see by it. At first, light was held to reside in the visual ray, or otherwise light was in the sight.

A philosopher has advanced, that objects were painted in the air, and this portrait produced a smaller, and this a third still less, till, through many gradations, a representation of the visible object was formed in the eye. But, after all endeavours to see clear, physica have left light very turbid and uncertain; the cataract still remain in the eye; the mechanism of vision has been explained with a laborious minuteness; but the great question remains in *stat: quo*, that is, how the organs of sight communicate with the soul. The modern philosophers, however, could not bear that mankind should not be more knowing than in the dark times of ignorance, and have cleared the European sight in this manner.

“ The retina is the organ of sight, or the reservoir of the visual rays, and this from its being of a velvet tissue, which must naturally render it very sensible and susceptible of the delicate and fine impressions of the visual rays; but the chief reason is its position at the bottom of the eye, where the corpuscles of the visual rays centre. This first operation of the retina being finished, it immediately enters on another, transmitting the objects to the brain by means of the optic nerve placed there for this very purpose.”

The analysis of the corpuscles has likewise put physics to its trumps. This mechanism of nature is covered with a veil beyond the power of human intellects ever to remove. Of the mystery of meteors the philosophers have given a satisfactory elucidation, with a methodized and connected plan of the formation of thunder; but many other secrets in the corpuscles, have put all their erudition and sagacity to a nonplus.

The subtle matter is so very refined as to elude imagination, and fire vanishes as soon as philosophers fix their eyes on it. Water has properties still undis-

covered: however well the effects are known, the *literati* are utterly ignorant of the cause.

On searching into the most hidden recesses of nature, they exhibit unheard-of wonders. A corpuscle no bigger than a grain of sand is a world full of creatures, all subject to the law of nature; and within these worlds are other worlds. After all the discussions on the magnet's attraction, there is an infinite distance between knowing its effects and knowing the cause.

Springs have exercised the talents of European philosophers, in dissertations equally singular and irrational. They were for knowing from whence springs had their water: as such a collection could not be formed from the rain, which no sooner falls on the earth than it is imbibed, the prevailing opinion is, that it proceeds from the sea: yet here no small difficulty occurred, the sea being salt, and springs fresh; so that some expedient was to be contrived; and this is a large reservoir under ground, where the water being percolated, freshens before it reaches the springs.

But the flood and ebb of the Ocean has gravelled both antient and modern physics: one would think that, in this point, the human mind had laboured after still greater extravagancy. There is nothing so wild and chimerical which the Europeans have not advanced to account for this phenomenon.

Some have said, that this rising of the waters proceeds from a great hole, into which the waters fall: others attribute it to the rivers discharging themselves into the sea: others again talk of a fire which God had given to this element, and which will burn to the end of the world.

The present Europeans, in general, hold the cause of the flood to be a pressure of the air by lunar globules. But this system is no less exceptionable than the others: one, and this no small difficulty, is, that under the line, where this pressure must be strongest, the flood and ebb are less than at the poles, where it is weaker.

The pressure of the air has been another puzzling article: It is owing, say some, to the circular motion  
of

of all bodies and the action of the vortexes around the earth ; and this is one of the causes of its elasticity : but this reasoning is scarce admitted except by those who take up with bare words, &c. &c.

If I have been something diffuse on this branch of science, it is from a persuasion, that, could we attain to a precise knowledge of matter, we should soon carry all the other sciences to perfection. I shall be the more concise on the other heads.

## LETTER VIII.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kie-tou-na, at Pekin.*

London.

**N**ATURAL history has not yet taught the Europeans the knowledge of nature : all the treatises of authors about it are no more than the romance of the material world : the very scheme of a natural history betrays a vanity unequal to such a performance.

The life of man is too short for discovering the least property of a mineral : how then is the perfect knowledge of the whole fossil, vegetable, and animal kingdoms attainable ?

The Europeans have not got so far as to form conjectures on nature ; they only suspect such and such things.

To natural effects they have given the general terms of *antipathy* and *sympathy* ; terms of no explanatory import, leaving nature as they find it. When a plant thrives by the vicinity of another, it is sympathy ; if a beast of one kind does not agree with another, this is antipathy. Ask them what are their qualities, they answer, Sympathy is a reciprocation of congruities, by which two things love and seek each other ; and antipathy is a reciprocation of diversities, by which they disagree and shun each other.

Some naturalists, indeed, lay open the cause of these

two effects, and very eloquently say, that both arise from the adhesion of the corpuscles.

Sympathetic love is brought about thus! an efflux of spirits, issuing from the person loving, goes and makes a pleasurable impression on the brain of the beloved person. But how does this solve the difficulty of sympathy? for a first cause there must be, directing that emission of spirits; and of this the naturalists say not a word.

Some have defined sympathy a consanguinity of heart, but without giving us the genealogical tree of its family. Of this beasts are equally susceptible. Wouldest thou know why a dog barks at a butcher, it is because the butcher is full of the animal spirits of some beasts newly slaughtered, and those spirits, which still retain their activity, are violently carried towards the dogs, so as to produce in them a disagreeable sensation. But here again we want the *primum mobile* of the determination of those spirits.

The others parts of natural history are only a heap of conjectures transmitted to posterity from generation to generation.

## LETTER IX.

*The Same, to the Same, at Pekin.*

London.

**T**HE Europeans must be allowed to have made some progress in mathematics. The cycloidal curve has taught them the time of day; and to know to a minute the time of one's existence, is something.

An objection has been brought against mathematics, that it cannot demonstrate several of its definitions and axioms: it is said, that a perfect circle, globe, or sphere, are not to be found any where; that only one tangent can be brought to a circle by the same point of contact; whereas an infinite number of circumferences may be drawn from one and the same point; that

that an obtuse angle, supposing it to augment by a progression, will never become a straight line; that the hyperbolic line can never touch its asymptote.

The philosophers are not agreed about the terms of this science: now the definitions of words should have been settled previously to any dispute about the definitions of things. Another misfortune is the custom of proving geometrically what, considering the nature of the human mind, lies without the verge of geometry.

Mathematics, it is certain, have rent the veil of ignorance, but not totally dispersed darkness. Infinitesimals have bewildered an infinite number of speculativists, who would be calculating what is beyond all calculation. Geometricians have lost themselves in the vast ocean of the subtle matter. Though the human mind may have been able to measure the primary elements, its penetration could never reach the inferior. Eternity vanishes at its first intuition. The Supreme Essence, ever impenetrable in his works, has not allowed this science to lay them open. The very material world has eluded the perspicuity of the mathematicians: it may be proved to them that they have proved little or nothing; so uncertain is the most certain of sciences.

An European geometrician, being at a loss to reconcile his pride with his ignorance of infinitesimals, termed them incomparables; and thereby he owns that nothing is to be compared to them.

Geometry might, possibly, be a certain science, were not all those which appertain to it both vague and dubious.

A modern author, who wrote a book purely to explode the prejudices of the human mind, affirms, that the principles of the systems of infinitude do not correspond with geometrical perspicuity and precision; that is, in other words, that geometry contradicts itself: "For instance, says he, the circle and infinitesimal polygon have two opposite properties: in the circle all the radiuses drawn from the centre to the circumference are necessarily equal; in the poly-



"gons, the apotomes cannot be conceived equal to the radiuses."

## LETTER X.

*The same, to the same, at Pekin.*

London.

**A**STRONOMY has been the cause of more revolutions in the human mind, than ever came to pass among the celestial bodies.

Astronomers have frequently changed the firmament, as it were taking down its several parts, and rebuilding it on a new plan, and farther contriving other spheres: thus man's hand gave another form to God's workmanship. A king of Castile said more than once, that God did not know what he was about at the creation; and that, had he consulted him in the formation of the universe, he would have put him in a better method.

Every astronomer has thrown the heavenly bodies into disorder, to make room for his imaginary arrangement. One Ptolemy, who, for a long time, superintended the course of the heavens, and whose astronomical chimeras were the most in vogue, placed the terraqueous globe in the centre of the universe, with the air for a wrapper, and a sphere of fire for a case: above the fire were the planets, and a little higher the fixed stars.

Having thus formed the primary celestial elements, the next thing was to set them in motion; and with only a puff of his breath all the stars were carried from east to west, as they still daily are: this is done by the movement of the first *mobile*: but this general motion did not affect the planets, which, on the contrary, roll from west to east, every one in its appointed orbit and velocity. He placed the Moon immediately over the fiery arch, near the earth: above the Moon was Mercury, then Venus, and then the Sun, each having its heaven; but, Mercury and Venus being irregular both in their courses and phases, he invented the

the epicycles, that is, the circles described by the planets round the sphere.

There were, besides, other heavens; where Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn, were disposed according to their rank: the general course of the planets was not to cease till the expiration of twenty-five thousand years, when they were all to set out again; the creation as it were beginning a-new.

Still is it not known from whence this action was derived: the astronomer, indeed, says, that behind all those heavens was a *mobile*, which set the whole vault in motion; but leaves his readers to find out what that same *mobile* is.

This astronomer was likewise called on to answer some difficulties in the irregular motion of the planets: those he evaded by the *perigeum*, which was a kind of astronomical barometer, with which he explained why the planets were sometimes high and sometimes low. To express the prodigious thickness which the epicycles gave to Venus, he made use of the word *excentricity*: other objections he left unnoticed, for want of terms to refute them.

This celestial æconomy has been quite inverted by a later astronomer, named Copernicus: the earth, after being fixed and immoveable for so many centuries, he put into motion.

The chief star-gazers sided with him as a consummate naturalist, and maintained that his system had an unquestionable claim to preference, being grafted on observations; whereas that of Ptolemy rested only on words.

This astronomer placed Mercury in the circle nearest to the Sun; but it was scarce worth while giving him a locality, he is so very seldom seen, being, as it is said, darkened by the solar effulgence.

After many close disquisitions on the obliquity of its axis to the Sun's equator, it remains still undiscovered.

Were it not that thou would'st be immediately drowned in the subtle matter, I should add a discussion in regard to one Descartes.

LET-



## LETTER XL

*The Same, to the Same, at Pekin.*

London.

**N**OTHING is to be learned from history ; it is no more than an ingenious arrangement of fictions, and published among the Europeans in the form of books.

It tears the universe to fritters. The best history is said to be that which comes nearest to verisimilitude : now this, without any farther inquiry, should withhold our belief, probability being generally as far from truth, as truth is from falsity.

A little reflection on the nature of the human mind will shew, what a prodigy it would be for an antient history to be true. It is very seldom that two men agree about a fact of which they were both eye-witnesses ; each gives it a different turn : how then is accuracy to be expected in events covered with the gloom of antiquity ?

History conforms to the taste and genius of nations now in Europe : this taste and genius vary with every age : history can have nothing fixed. A Christian writer furnishes me with a true picture of it.

“ History, says he, is composed nearly by the same  
“ rule as victuals are dressed ; every nation in its own  
“ way : and thus the same thing is diversified into as  
“ many different ragouts, as there are countries in the  
“ world. Each nation, each religion, each sect,  
“ takes the same facts raw, as it finds them ; seasons  
“ and cooks them according to its taste ; and then  
“ every reader holds them to be true or false, as  
“ they square with, or contradict, his notions, &c.  
“ &c.”

So little did the world regard annalists, that, had it not been for the Greeks and Romans, there would not have been a history in the whole world ; and there being only those two nations, who have given an account

count of other people, what they have said may very well be suspected.

The Europeans give a supernatural and turgid air to this science: it is always the history of Gods they are writing, never descending to that of men.

The marvellous and astonishing are thick sown. An Asiatic is out of patience at reading, in the European annals, that in a certain battle one side lost a hundred thousand men, and not so much as one was killed on the other.

Herodotus, the founder of history, is looked on as a fabulous writer: this is enough to bring history into suspicion.

## LETTER XII.

*The Same, to the Same, at Pekin.*

London.

**C**HRONOLOGY, or the knowledge of times on which history rests, has no better foundation. The chronologists have pulled down the edifice of the world, and created another, which they have arbitrarily placed at what time they pleased.

They will have every thing to be new: the heaven and the earth, the whole creation are but of yesterday.

Some make the æra of the universe but five thousand seven hundred years; others, only two thousand two hundred and sixty, &c. as if this event depended on human calculations. To give an appearance of truth to chronology, epochas have been invented, and on such an uncertain foundation has this science been raised: that is, the knowledge of time is grounded only on mere conjectures.

The Europeans are so little skilled in the solar circle, that, after deliberating on several ways for reforming the errors of the Roman year, they themselves have left one of a minute, which every three hundred and thirty-one years becomes sensible.

Astro-

Astronomical calculations require precision, and the omission only of a second every century, destroys that precision.

European chronology does not tell in what times the principal events of the world happened, nor in what ages those kings lived who caused so many revolutions in the world: now this might lead one to question whether they ever existed. This science leaves errors as it finds them.

The foundation of Rome, a capital article in chronology, is a matter of controversy.

An Englishman, who has composed a system of this knowledge of times, affirms, that the reigns of the kings ought to be calculated only at the rate of twenty years, contrary to the estimates of the chronologists who made it forty; and thus he introduced a chronological difference of several centuries: but how uncertain must a science be, when once it is made to depend on probabilities, or suppositions!

### LETTER XIII.

*The Same, to the Mandarin Kie-tou-na, at Pekin.*

London.

**T**HIS letter shall be taken up with physic, that dreadful science, which has got the life of man within its gripe.

There are companies in Europe who have a licence to kill: these sentences of death are called a physician's prescription.

The practice of this science is thus: A man in black, of a solemn deportment, comes into a sick person's chamber: after asking some questions concerning his illness, he writes down on a paper the medicaments proper for curing him; and a few days after the death of the patient, this black man comes and asks payment for his cure: nay, there are countries in Europe where a dead person cannot be buried, till the physician who killed him be paid.

The

The annals of the universe inform us, that anciently only one family was acquainted with physic; and greatly is it to be wished, for the sake of mankind, that this science was still a family-secret.

At present, any one who pleases may practise physic; and all the mystery is, to learn, in a few years, the cures of all kinds of distempers.

This science has been rendered more destructive by adding to it surgery, which is the art of slashing bodies, and dissecting carcases.

Physicians, in order to come at a knowledge of the human body, cut it into a thousand pieces; and, besides shortening the life of men, they kill them a second time when dead.

Europeans will very gravely ask, whether we can do without physicians? This is asking, in other words, whether God has created a nature so imperfect, that it cannot subsist without the help of art. What physicians have animals? This decides the question. The annals of the Christian religion mention a king, named Hezekiah, who suppressed a book on the virtues of plants, lest it might come into use, and thus multiply distempers: it were proper to suppress physic, that every body, having no other recourse, might become his own physician.

## LETTER XIV.

*The Same, to the Same, at Peking.*

London.

**T**HE king of France's ambassador to this court is arrived: thus he replaces two successive plenipotentiaries since the peace. I conclude he must be a great politician; at least, the critical negotiation with which he is charged requires such a one.

The peace between France and England is only patched up: the war very probably will soon break out again: the occasions of disputes and quarrels between the two nations still subsist as before, and without any abatement in their mutual hatred, antipathy, and rivalry.

In

In such a situation, to be sure, France has taken care to send a person experienced in the affairs of Europe, and thoroughly acquainted with the interest of France ; possessed of every engaging quality ; open and free without weakness ; polite, affable, and courteous, and all with dignity.

Rich, that he may be able to bribe high ; generous, that he may dazzle the public eye by splendid expenses ; liberal, noble, and grand, that his magnificence may be striking.

Popular, mingling in all public diversions, seeming to be fond of them, praising the taste and genius of the nation ; shewing himself every where, and being the soul of every company.

Insinuating, to gain a party, and watchful in keeping it up ; easy with the people, and lofty with the great.

Dexterous, that he may come at the prince's temper, the genius of the ministers, and the influence of favourites.

Artful in intrigues and cabals, to support the present ministry, as favourable to France ; and hinder the re-establishment of the former, as an enemy to it.

Affecting great confidence in the nation's honour and probity ; but having always in his hand the last treaty of peace, to see to the observance of the articles.

Lastly, cultivating for some years the tranquillity between the two nations, this being the capital point of his embassy, that France may have time to form a navy.

LET-



## LETTER XV.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kie-tou-na, at Pekin.*

London.

I Had before-hand intimated to you the French plenipotentiary's fall ; and now it is come, to some purpose. His courage being very mettlesome, he has seized the very first opportunity of fighting ; so that there was a necessity of locking him up in a room, and sending for a file of musqueteers to one of the secretaries of state's, at whose house he had raised such a disturbance, before he could be brought to sign a paper agreeing to forget that he is a soldier, and mind only his ministerial office.

As the politicians in England make inferences on every thing, some construe this detention, by which the crown of France itself was, for some minutes, put under arrest, to presage glory to England.

Some carry political superstition so far as to believe, that, in the first battle between the two nations, the king of France will be taken prisoner. Yet I have been told of an English lord, who, notwithstanding all ominous predictions, offers to lay a thousand guineas that will not be the case ; and his reason is, because Lewis the Fifteenth does not go into the field.

Thus it is that ministers disgrace the princes they represent at foreign courts ; and the very persons, who are deputed by the states to do honour to their nation, are the first in exposing it to public derision.

LET-

## LETTER XVI.

*The Mandarin Kie-tou-na, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, at Paris.*

Pekin.

**S**OME representations against the Christian religion and its teachers, having been lately laid before our sublime emperor, he appointed an extraordinary commission for inquiring into the allegations. The Chinese mandarins, on perusing an authentic account of the Christian doctrine and morality, resolved, that with regard to its ceremonies it was ridiculous, mean, extravagant, and irrational; but could in no wise affect the constitution or public tranquillity, its morality being unexceptionable: for lenity, mildness, and benevolence, and especially obedience to superiors, and good-will towards all men, are the very foundations of it; strictly forbidding theft, violence, fraud, and rapine. It says, Thou shalt not lye, Thou shalt not slander, Thou shalt not take away thy neighbour's wife. The love of God, justice, and self-denial, are strongly recommended in every part of it.

Farther, this religion was found to be very peaceable, and promotive of quiet and good neighbourhood; accordingly, on the commissioners report, the emperor ordered that things should remain on the former footing, and that the bonzes of this sect might reside at Peking unmolested.

I own, the contrast between this religion and those who profess it is unaccountable. I have caused private inquiries to be made into the domestic behavior of those Christian mandarins, who cross the seas amidst so many hardships and dangers, and take so much pains to instruct men who in no wise are related to them, and to whom they owe no obligations; and, after all, it appears to me, that these ministers of Christ are lofty and arrogant, sour and conceited, ambitious and eager after titles, distinctions and honours.

Solve



Solve me this riddle, and, if thou canst discover what their design is, acquaint me with it ; for I cannot think that men act at random in what they make their main business, and with such intense application. There is always some private view, and generally not that which is imagined.

## LETTER XVII.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi pi, to the Mandarin Kie-tou-na, at Pekin.*

London.

**T**HERE was no need of an extraordinary commission for inquiring into the Christian worship. As to the practice of certain duties, that is what all religions agree in. Nothing can have a nearer affinity to the morality of one sect than that of another. Theft, lying, slander, are forbidden by them all : they all recommend the love of one's neighbour, charity, and submission, with an abstinence from unlawful pleasures and the government of our passions.

Any sect failing in only one of these points would soon be at an end, as it would be attended with a general corruption of manners, which of course must be productive of confusion and ruin.

However different the doctrine of every religion may be, the morality must necessarily be the same.

Notwithstanding this uniformity, a wise government will not fail to secure itself against a foreign religion, which, not being adapted either to the climate, or to its political and civil laws, may occasion great disturbances.

Those sects, which endeavour to establish themselves in a foreign country, cannot compass their ends but by weakness and submission. It is one of the principal maxims of a new religion, to insinuate itself underhand, and as insensibly as it can ; for, should it make a noise, the government would be alarmed, and quickly suppress it. Thus obedience and resignation are no  
more

more than political appearances, to procure a toleration ; but when once it comes to be embraced by the great men, and countenanced by the prince ; in a word, when it is become a match for the established religion, then it bursts out, and, like a torrent, bears down all before it.

This same Christianity, which in China appears so meek, so disinterested, and so undesigning, took the same measures with the Pagans. It shrouded itself a long time in obscurity and silence : the Roman emperors scarce heard any thing of it for several centuries. One would have thought, from its demure appearance, that it asked nothing ; but when it had thus clandestinely prepared all its engines, had set all its springs to work, and its forces were come to be on a balance with those of Paganism, it openly declared itself the enemy of the old Religion, and overthrew it at one blow : it reduced all Europe to a conformity, and obliged its sovereigns to receive baptism. This part of the world has not now any government where the Christian doctrine is not established ; and its ambition, not satisfied with Europe, is taking large strides towards bringing Asia, Africa and America, under its yoke.

I prostrate myself before the comprehensive judgment of our august emperor, and ever admire his wisdom. But wherefore assemble a council to deliberate on what has been already decided ? We have several edicts of our emperors, by which no churches are to be built to Christ, and strictly forbidding all Chinese to embrace that religion : what need of any thing farther ?

As to the missionaries, whose behaviour seems so unaccountable to thee, it is not at all so to me. The favourite passion of that set of men is a thirst of power and superiority. This is an impression of self-love, and the more strong and sensible from the labours and troubles annexed to it.

There are two ways of gratifying our vanity ; one, temporal government, and this is the self-love of kings ; the other, the supremacy of spiritual government, and this self-love is that of priests : the latter is the

the more lively and active, since, to the pleasure accruing from it in this life, it adds the hope of an eternal felicity in the other.

## LETTER XVIII.

*The Mandarin Ni-o-fan, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi,  
at London.*

Lisbon.

**T**HIS comes from Lisbon. God created the world, and ten thousand years after, spitting on the earth, he made Portugal. This kingdom is posterior to Spain itself: one would think that it is but yesterday that it came out of nature's hands.

The men are not yet formed, the land lies fallow, and nothing of arts and trades is to be seen in it. In short, Portugal is the America of Europe, and much of it remains yet to be discovered.

I could almost say, that this nation is in its cradle, and but just born. It may once have been old, but is become a child again.

The European governments, I observe, have their periodical ages of strength and weakness, grandeur and abasement; the people are alternately powerful and weak, active and indolent.

Portugal's present state is a lethargy. This people shall be the subject of several letters. It is indeed the same ground as other men lived on; but certainly the Portuguese differ very much from the other inhabitants of this continent.

L E T-

## LETTER XIX.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kie-tou-na, at Peking.*

London.

**I** Dined lately with a lord, who had given me repeated invitations. After dinner, the table being cleared, and bottles and glasses brought, one of the company very spiritedly pronounced these words, *Ob-or-nob*! It is a kind of sounding *to arms*; at which the company are to make ready to begin the healths, or *toasts* as they are here called.

In this ceremony there is an established progression. Political *toasts* take the lead; then come the pretty women, and these go on to the end of the chapter.

These healths are an admirable contrivance for ruining one's own. The guests, after gorging themselves with various foods, fall to swilling till they have quite lost their reason. The toasting of the royal family alone is sufficient to make a company drunk; nine or ten bumpers is the thing in its present state, unless the toaster swallows them all down in one glass.

All are to drink the healths on an equal footing, without so much as a hair's breadth difference in the bumpers; for, at an English table, it is an indispensable law, that all are to disorder themselves.

These healths give rise to an infinite number of diseases; they are productive of the gout, the stone, and gravel: the jolly Britons make invalids of themselves in wishing health to others.

Some *toasts*, however, must be accounted of ill consequence; for the health of a certain \* person is not to be drunk.

English

\* He must mean the Pretender; but that toast is now at an end.

English *toasts*, instead of being sedentary, are ever on the wing, roving over every part of the world. A general who is abroad, and hundreds of leagues from Great-Britain, makes hundreds drunk here every day; and so far from having drunk with these people, he knows nothing in the world about them. It is not uncommon that healths are drunk to the dead; and in the news they find that for days, and sometimes weeks, they have been toasting a carcase.

War has its particular toast: *Success to the British arms* lays many a Briton on the ground; they impair their constitution in mending that of the state.

The *toasts* are not the same in every part of London: that of St. James's-street is different from that of Lombard-street; the precincts of the Exchange never toast the royal family, or include them all in one moderate glass; it is the quality who distinguish themselves in this branch of competition.

The French drink to the persons present; the English, to the health of the absent. Whether it be ill-breeding to *toast* the fair-sex in their presence, I know not: but it is certain, that in England the ladies are withdrawn before their healths come on.

More than one woman is so much toasted, that she may boast of having several times intoxicated the best part of the nation: yet this *toasting* is of no real advantage to young ladies; for, whilst glasses are breaking to their health, they are left to keep company with themselves.

I have been told of a young lady at court, who laid her injunctions on all the young nobility of her acquaintance, never to drink her health: and she found herself the better for it; several, who used to be *toasting* her from morning to night at the tavern, now closely attended her levee.

With regard to the fair-sex, there are modest and immodest toasts; that is, drinking to all women of virtue, and to all abandoned women: the former are so few, that british brains can go through with them very composedly; it is the latter which set the company in an uproar.

Though



Though there be a collection of healths which would fill a middle-sized book, the repetitions are so many that a company are soon brought to the last leaf of their toasting-book ; then, for want of friends, they drink to their enemies, since an Englishman must ever *toast* over his cups.

Tradition speaks of a club of bottle-men in Queen Anne's time, who, to save the trouble of inventing new healths, used to *toast* hell : the first health was Lucifer ; then all the infernal family and chieftains went round ; but these *toasts* likewise were soon exhausted, the demons being not so numerous as the dead ; so, to prolong the festivity, they added to their toasts those memorable personages, whose portion is eternal misery. This club has already emptied two thousand ton of wine in honour of popes and cardinals broiling in hell.

It is thought, that, at the commencement of the next century, this laudable society will proceed to *toast* the Romish priests and friars ; which, in all likelihood will furnish bumpers for two or three hundred years ; and, should they afterwards admit among their toasts all the emperors, kings, politicians, ministers, and secretaries of state, who are damned, they may *toast* away to the end of the world.

## LETTER XX.

*The Same, to the Same, at Peking.*

London.

**T**HERE is an animal here of a species quite unknown in China ; it is called a *sham-gallant*, from its feigning perpetually to be a favourite of the women : not that he troubles himself about women's favours ; but his business is to make others believe it.

This ideal gallant puts himself to real torture ; his brain must be continually at work in striking out new devices to keep up his reputation ; he must affect to be familiar with women whom he does not know, and  
give

give innuendos of delights which he never was admitted to taste: he must cough much, affect to have caught cold, thereby giving to understand that he spent the night with some beauty, and left her very early in the morning: he must always have about him a dozen of miniature pictures, as so many indications of his being the Adonis of the originals: he must haunt all the public walks, otherwise he will soon forfeit the character he affects.

He must be at the opera at the drawing-up of the curtain, make his appearance at Covent-Garden at the middle of the play, and hastily come into Drury-Lane house at the dropping of the curtain. These are the functions which a sham-gallant must constantly pass through as he values his character; a character, which a Chinese would think wretchedness in the abstract.

## LETTER XXI.

*The Same, to the Same, at Pekin.*

London.

**I** Lately paid a visit to a lady of quality; and an Englishman, who was visiting there like myself, asked her how many children she had. The lady, to my great amazement, answered, that she did not keep an account of such particulars, but, if he pleased to ask her chambermaid, she could inform him. Thou mayest judge from this, whether the European women mind what passes in their house, when they do not know what happens in their bed.

A lady of quality thinks it beneath her to look into the affairs of her household; this care is left to a steward; and the business of the house is transacted by her husband, as chief domestic, in conjunction with a dozen footmen.

Particular societies are an image of the general society: every private house is a state: within the state: they are small republics, the assemblage of which forms that of the nation.

Nature and religion, in uniting a man and woman by marriage, distribute their offices to each; one has his obligations, the other her duties; and a failure on either side must disturb the public order, and overthrow the republic.

The Chinese women are perfectly well acquainted with their conjugal duties, and sedulously act up to them: being by the laws confined within doors, they are always amidst their domestic concerns, which they make their chief study. This matrimonial morality they know nothing of in Europe; a woman here seems to give her hand to a man, with a view of exempting herself from every obligation, and marries only to live the more at large.

## LETTER XXII.

*The Same, to the Same, at Peking.*

London.

**T**HE European governments do not provide for the people's subsistence: this great concern, so deserving the attention of the political and civil constitution, is left to chance; live who can.

France and England swarm with people who may be said to have no existence of their own; they live at second-hand, for their income rises from the superfluity of others.

I am told there are, at least, 20,000 persons in Paris and London, who when they rise in the morning know not where to get a dinner: their existence, which rests only on one daily meal, is wound up every day like a clock: twenty-four hours is the duration of their life; they are indebted to others for the very air they breathe. Yet some kind of ingenuity they must have; thus to raise contributions on the public for their subsistence.

The most distinguished among these ephemerists are the projectors: they have always a letter-case stuffed with schemes, and though there be a certain profit of several millions, they will transfer a great part of it

to you, only for advancing some small sum. What is very strange in such a bargain is, that they are sure it will answer: they are known to the ministers, they confer with the great, they have access every where, they want nothing, but money.

The second are the adepts: these can make gold, and transmute metals; they are acquainted with the darkest mysteries of physics: all nature lies open to them. Here again the profit is evident; yet for a few silver pieces they offer you ingots of gold, as many as you shall please. This class, however, are falling into disrepute, yet are not without their customers; for, thanks to human folly, the art of making gold has still some believers.

But the number of the votaries to the great work is nothing in comparison of those who follow the little work. The love-brokers in this capital far outstrip those who follow any other mystery; it is the surest and shortest cut to make one's fortune. Accordingly numbers of well-bred creditable people choose this calling; many who are now in considerable posts and employments, would have wanted bread, had it not been for their address in coupling. These dexterous persons must be allowed very useful in society, otherwise vice would be at a stand, or have a long way about to go; whereas their intervention brings it immediately to a point.

The third class of those whose subsistence is precarious and dependent, are the sycophants by profession: the great cannot do without these; for who would they get to cry up their equipages, their dogs, and their horses? who would extol their cooks? and, what is more, who would compliment them on their taste, knowledge, and wit? Base abject souls, to be thus continually lying! and such wretches are the sycophants.

Professed gamesters I omit, as forming a class by themselves; and the number of these at London, equals that of the stars in the firmament.

## LETTER XXIII.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Cotao-yu-se, at Pekin.*

London.

**I**N Europe vice is in close contact with virtue ; in many cases they appear blended. Here, the worthy people are only those who prudently guard against a discovery, that they are otherwise.

The baronet lately took me to a mixed company, who are all esteemed very worthy persons, people of character.

Having seated ourselves, and looked about a while, my companion whispered to me, All sham. You do not say so ! answered I : what ! that man in black, with so sanctified a look, and who appears to be an ecclesiastic ; who talks so exaltedly of God, and the nothingness of sublunary things ; is he a hypocrite ?

I do not mean quite so much as that, replied the baronet : nay, he has many virtues ; the purity of his morals charms those who converse with him ; he is assiduous in his functions as a clergyman, and behaves well as a member of society, but harbours a passion for that lady next him, which all the rigour of his morality cannot eradicate.

And that gentleman next but one to him, added I, who has been proving, that he who retains another's property cannot be an honest man, is he another impostor ? No, said he, he is a man of morals, and particularly the most rigid casuist, in point of restitution, whom I ever knew : he demonstrates geometrically that there is no being virtuous with a disposition to defraud another of his property. I never heard any thing stronger than his reasonings upon this head. But he himself most unjustly retains a very considerable trust committed to him some years since, whilst the true proprietor is straitened : by this he is enabled to keep his equipage, and come here in full case, to make a parade of his elocution and probity, against  
the



the horrid crime of keeping what does not belong to us.

And that third gentleman, continued I, who has just been so keen on the usurers, is it all mere talk?—He is not destitute of morality, and generally exerts it in inveighing against lending on interest with a security. On this topic, besides the gospel, he introduces authorities from Pagans, among whom such loans were forbidden under great penalties; he evinces, beyond denial, that, be the case what it will, it is utterly inconsistent with honour and conscience to take *six per cent.* It is indeed what he never does, for he has, at this very time, in his house, pledges to the amount of ten thousand pounds at twenty-five *per cent.* And that middle-aged lady, opposite that conscientious gentleman, and so modestly dressed, with down-cast eyes, and ever talking of God, is not her practice of a piece? Why, answered the baronet, to be sure the flame of divine love burns in her very strongly; she is full of ejaculations and devout breathings, and never misses going to church four times a day; only it is to be wished that she did not always chuse those times when it is most frequented, that her devotion were actuated purely by divine motives, and that in her Christian charity she would be less choleric and imperious in her house. I would have her devotion not to be a perpetual plague to all about her, and that, as she sets up for such a fervent love of God, she would have some little affection for her husband and children, with a spark of fellow-feeling for her servants.

And that lady behind her, who was saying to the gentleman standing on one side of her chair, that she cannot abide a man should look her in the face, is that no more than grimace? No, she is really inconceivably nice in love-affairs: I dare say she would tear that man's eyes out, who should tell her to her face that he loves her: she may in such articles be said to have a strength of mind above her sex; yet that ecclesiastical Adonis over-against her has kindled a foible in

her breast, which all her affected modesty, or more solid virtue, is not able to suppress.

You observe the other next her, who has so glibly exercised her tongue against the luxury, prodigality, and enormous expences of the present times, as an obstruction to the progress of virtue, education in general being cramped by excess in other disbursements: does she practise as she preaches? Yes, answered he, she is a very regular woman, and understands good management: she is said to have even read Aristotle's *Oeconomies*, purely to improve herself in domestic qualifications. No luxury or profuseness is seen where she has any hand, and great are her savings to her husband: but then what can be said for the much greater sums which she hazards at play? It is not long since, in one night only, she lost as much money as would defray the education of three of her children, and portion her eldest daughter, who now, very probably, must go without a husband.

Thus it is, replied the baronet, that, among us, they who aim at distinguishing themselves from others by solid qualities, acquire the wished-for reputation. Sir, said I, your virtue is so near a-kin to vice, that an immoral Chinese is on a footing with a virtuous European.

Such villainies, covered with the veil of religion, or prudential regards, are, in my opinion, the more dangerous. I aver, that, in sound morality, bare-faced guilt is less criminal; for its bare-facedness, being ever disgusting and offensive, is the cause of its being shunned; whereas the gauze covering is of an attractive nature.

## LETTER XXIV.

*The Mandarin Ni-ou-ran, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, at London.*

Lisbon.

THE dominions of the king of Portugal are immense; his sovereignty extends to every part of the globe; so that he may be said to reign all over the universe. The Romans, who conquered all the nations of the earth, did not carry their empire so far. Yet this monarch, with all his greatness, is so diminutive, as scarce to be perceived in Europe. The continent hardly knows there is any such monarchy, its subjects being so very few.

Portugal is so bare of people, that the village where we make our porcelaine has more inhabitants.

This depopulation is not owing to any natural disadvantage: perhaps there is not a country better adapted for the propagation of the human species, than Portugal; a fine serene air, with a climate totally free from those distemperatures and irregularities which cramp nature in its products: it is in the political system, or the government, that the fault lies. Agrarian laws, duly executed, are wanting; every one does with his lands as he pleases: the whole monarchy may be left to lie fallow, without a word to be said to the owners: now, as I have proved to thee elsewhere, agriculture and population go hand in hand.

You do not see a farmer or husband-man throughout the whole kingdom: sowing and reaping are things quite unknown here.

This kingdom's harvest is made in the new world, and brought every year in specie to Lisbon in leathern bags. This is the commodity which furnishes it with all other commodities.

This one circumstance shews thee, that Portugal is continually in jeopardy; for, in case of a bad harvest in those two or three nations which supply

it with corn, it must starve; people who deal in provisions selling only the surplus of home-consumption.

Natural necessities, as the materials of food and apparel, should always be cultivated at home; and as to the requisites of ostentation and luxury, if they are brought from abroad, it is not perhaps so much amiss. It is amazing, that people who talk so much of their politics and wise regulations, should never have thought of securing the main chance by agriculture and grassery, but, amidst so many examples, neglect the very first principles of civil government.

### LETTER XXV.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Cotno-yu-se, at Peking.*

London.

THE following came to me by the penny post. No very important dispatches are to be expected from a courier who values his labour so very low; and I do not send thee this as any great matter.

I suppose it a critique on the English theatre, as calling in every thing that can be thought of to expose it in every light, morals, elegance, propriety, and management.

“ Mr. CHINESE,

“ It seems you have no public theatre at Peking, and  
“ instead of plays only rhapsodies, and these acted in  
“ private houses, by a parcel of buffoons, as they  
“ are sent for. The want of such an institution little  
“ agrees with the idea entertained of your nation, as  
“ one of the most ingenious and best policed in the  
“ world.

“ It is plays alone that distinguish civilised nations  
“ from those which are otherwise. The savages are  
“ such, only because they have no theatres; and even  
“ we Englishmen, ourselves, were it not for Covent-  
“ Garden and Drury-Lane houses, should be confound-  
“ ed with barbarians. Indeed, how should a nation

“ have

“ have morals and manners without a school for  
 “ teaching them? Religion, it is plain, can effect no  
 “ such improvement; for people of sense have long  
 “ since left off going to church, whereas they scarce  
 “ miss a night at the play.

“ The method then, that you should observe in  
 “ founding a dramatic theatre at Pekin, is this: You  
 “ are first to make choice of a large piece of ground,  
 “ and there build a spacious lofty saloon, where three  
 “ or four thousand spectators may sit at ease; for there  
 “ are always more people at a theatre than at church;  
 “ and it has been observed, that the worst play draws  
 “ more company than the best sermon.

“ Round the inside of this saloon you are to run  
 “ several rows of separate boxes, that the young  
 “ ladies and gentlemen may act together several  
 “ little dumb scenes, whilst the play is going for-  
 “ wards.

“ Over these rows you will likewise build a gallery;  
 “ the success of plays depending very much on the  
 “ taste of those judicious persons who generally fill  
 “ that place.

“ At the farther end of this saloon you are to build  
 “ the stage, which should be about five feet and a half  
 “ high from the ground. On the flooring of this stage  
 “ are to be openings, that, on occasion, ghosts may rise,  
 “ and hell itself make its appearance. The ceiling to  
 “ represent an open sky, that the Gods may come  
 “ down without obstruction; the descent of a Deity  
 “ in all his attributes being found to have a very good  
 “ effect on the audience.

“ Be sure to hang six large lustres over the stage,  
 “ that the actors may see to speak; for day-light  
 “ must never be seen in a theatre. One ray from  
 “ the sun would spoil the best play; for plays, to  
 “ be represented truly, must be acted in a false  
 “ light.

“ Behind the stage you are to provide large ware-  
 “ houses for the theatrical utensils and equipages, par-  
 “ ticularly one which may contain a scene or two of



“ clouds, and as many sets of skies, cloudy and serene,  
 “ to serve occasionally.

“ Next to this you must have another, for the sun  
 “ and moon, and some constellations: these stars being  
 “ of linen, it will behove you to take care that the  
 “ moths do not get into the sun, and the rats not gnaw  
 “ the moon to pieces.

“ Having thus secured the firmament, your next  
 “ care must be about the elements.

“ The princes introduced on the stage, generally  
 “ coming from the East or West Indies, it will be  
 “ necessary to have a paste-board sea, which is to be  
 “ kept within a long entry, or passage, and never to  
 “ be undammed but at the proper moment.

“ You will also want some rivers, otherwise the  
 “ principal personages will be at a loss: the theatrical  
 “ country being very much intersected, you cannot do  
 “ without rivers: however, this you may be easy  
 “ about; for, the waves being of boards, your car-  
 “ penter will provide rivers.

“ Another requisite piece of furniture is bridges,  
 “ as otherwise the actors would be on one side the  
 “ water, and the audience on the other.

“ Besides the sea and rivers, you must also have  
 “ some shipping; else how will you land the foreign  
 “ potentates on the stage?

“ You would otherwise be under a necessity of  
 “ bringing them in calashes, or on camels; but what  
 “ spectator do you think will wait a year at least for  
 “ their coming?

“ On the landing a principal personage, immediately  
 “ drop anchor, that the play may not be wrecked at  
 “ the very harbour's mouth.

“ You must provide half a dozen gilt yachts, to  
 “ seize those princesses whose virtue would not allow  
 “ them to gratify a lover on the stage, but will not  
 “ be so scrupulous when carried off to the other side  
 “ of the water.

“ You must provide a close, which will hold a  
 “ score of palaces, gardens, avenues, immense heaths,  
 “ and plains, mountains, and large forests of oak and  
 “ pines;

“ pines ; but herein be sure not to exceed the extent  
“ of a thousand leagues.

“ You cannot well be without barracks for the  
“ dramatical red-coats, one wing for the foot, and  
“ another for the horse.

“ An arsenal will likewise be necessary, and it must  
“ be well stored with offensive and defensive arms, from  
“ battering-cannon and broad swords to a pocket-  
“ pistol and a poniard.

“ Directly behind the theatre must be two closets  
“ for the instruments of death ; one to hold the vessels,  
“ cups and goblets, for poisoning those persons who  
“ are to die without any loss of blood.

“ Between these two closets leave a wide space  
“ for gibbets, racks, and pillories ; for in a well-  
“ policed theatre there must be an execution twice a  
“ week.

“ Behind all these warehouses you must have a  
“ burial place for the unfortunate heroes of the  
“ drama ; here you must not spare for ground, as in  
“ high tragedy the sword or poison carries off every  
“ year at least three hundred emperors, as many  
“ potentates, two hundred queens, and above one  
“ hundred confidants, exclusive of those great per-  
“ sonages whose happiness it is to die a natural  
“ death.

“ Having completed your theatre and warehouses,  
“ you proceed to form your company : herein tragedy  
“ must be your first care ; for you must begin by  
“ setting your audience a weeping, before you make  
“ them laugh.

“ Choose for your tragic actors persons of a solemn  
“ countenance, and whose dismal aspect may cause a  
“ general mourning in the house.

“ Your capital actor should have a thundering  
“ voice ; no matter for his stature, if he does but  
“ make a noise : for tragedy is a work of the lungs ;  
“ its perfection consists in mouthing and bellowing,  
“ and throwing one's self into strange postures, raving  
“ like a demoniac.

“ Your

“ Your prime actress, to excel, must be like a fury;  
 “ she should lay aside all decency, and forget her sex,  
 “ that she may give herself up to despair and rage with  
 “ the greater power: could she be brought to foam a  
 “ little in her fits of passion and revenge, it would not  
 “ be amiss.

“ As to tragical subjects, be mindful to make choice  
 “ of the most extravagant and wonderful; and be sure  
 “ never to keep to nature: it is too plain and uniform  
 “ to strike the senses: it makes a London audience  
 “ yawn, and probably would lull your Pekin gentry  
 “ to sleep.

“ But, in case you are in want of geniuses for  
 “ writing tragedies, we will send you models, and  
 “ these you need only fill up: we ourselves do the  
 “ like with our neighbours the French.

“ Be particularly mindful that your heroes, when  
 “ on the stage, speak differently from common men.  
 “ First, they must modulate their voice into a kind of  
 “ singing, in the dramatical phraseology called dé-  
 “ claiming. Secondly, let their expressions be strong,  
 “ glowing, sonorous, and turgid; and all in rhyme, or  
 “ at least in metre.

“ To your best tragedies tag wretched farces; for,  
 “ by making your audience cry three-hours successively  
 “ every day, the fibres of their phizzes would become  
 “ so contracted and rigid, that the best comedies ever  
 “ written would not afterwards be able to bring them  
 “ to a laugh.

“ In the habits of your actors be as whimsical and  
 “ grotesque as you possibly can; ridiculousness is  
 “ absolutely necessary to revive the nodding audience:  
 “ especially let there be a great extravagancy in the  
 “ minutiae of the habiliments and equipage.

“ For instance, an Indian emperor's whiskers should  
 “ hang down to his breast; let the diameter of his  
 “ umbrella not be less than eight yards, and his chariot  
 “ fill the whole stage.

“ When you bring a king on the stage, crowd it  
 “ with guards. A prince, who should come and relate  
 “ his misfortunes without a score of blackguards at  
 “ his

his heels, with long sticks in their hands, painted like spikes, would make little or no impression on the audience.

Let me not forget to tell you that you must provide magicians: the weather being usually the same on the stage in all seasons, without them there can be no rain or hail; and sometimes a play would be damned, were it not for a tempest.

If your actors have not a voice to stir the company, call in thunder: thunder indeed does not draw tears, but it frightens; and whatever agitates the senses belongs to tragedy.

Besides magicians, you must have phantoms or ghosts; for to strike and affect is but half the business; you must endeavour to terrify likewise: provide bloody shirts for your ghosts, and powder or white paint to make them look as pale as death. They are not to stay long on the stage; the effect they are to produce, must be, as it were, instantaneous and cursory: however, occasion so requiring, let them speak; for, if the appearance of a phantom terrifies, much more the speaking.

Do not forget ghosts; there is no doing without them: a tragedy without a ghost is like a body without a soul.

If you can also find out persons fit to practise charms, it will be a great point: there is always some necessity for these in a tragedy, were it only to prevent lassitude of mind, and to beguile the spectator.

If, after all, the audience sit with dry eyes, draw up your lustres higher, and introduce a night-scene: this cannot fail; for being without light always inclines one to be melancholy.

Besides putting the audience in the dark, their pity is also to be excited.

An unfortunate king, but still possessed of his kingdom, is looked on with coldness and indifference. The rules of proper tragedy require, that he should be stripped of his dominions, be forced to fly his country, without any of the attributes of royalty;

— and,

“ and, to deepen the distress, it would not be  
 “ amiss were he to appear quite naked, or in his  
 “ shirt.

“ When an unhappy princess comes on the stage to  
 “ bewail her misfortunes, it might do very well if  
 “ she had two or three little children about her: and,  
 “ what could not fail of producing an admirable  
 “ effect, let one of them be taught some little part, in  
 “ which he should say, in a whimpering tone, that he  
 “ has eaten nothing these three days.

“ To raise sympathy to its highest pitch, contrive, at  
 “ the farther end of the theatre, a prison or dungeon,  
 “ where one of your royal or heroic actors is to  
 “ appear fettered: you cannot conceive how much an  
 “ audience is affected by the rattling of a long iron  
 “ chain.

“ But terror is not the sole end of tragedy; it  
 “ should likewise excite courage; and this cannot be  
 “ better done than by frequently fighting battles on  
 “ the stage; and then be sure to let it be well strewed  
 “ with slain.

“ The last act of the play, which should set every  
 “ body a crying like a whipped school-boy, must of  
 “ course be the most tender and pathetic. This cannot  
 “ be better done than by erecting a large scaffold on  
 “ the stage, and hanging it with velvet, as I suppose  
 “ it is not dear in China; for a scaffold and black  
 “ velvet immediately draw floods of tears: and, if  
 “ you heighten this circumstance by bringing in an  
 “ executioner, it will throw the audience into an  
 “ agony.

“ But that the catastrophe of the tragedy may be as  
 “ tragical as possible, order it so, that all the actors  
 “ come on the stage, and, in the two last scenes,  
 “ successively kill one another. Emperors, kings,  
 “ princes, heroes, confidants, guards, &c. they must  
 “ all fall; spare not the very candle-snuffer, that, at  
 “ the end of the play, the lights burning dim, most of  
 “ the spectators may quarrel and butcher one another  
 “ as they go out.”



## LETTER XXVI.

*The Same, to the Same, at Pekin.*

London.

I Have had a second attack on the stage sent me, which, to complete the former, I here transmit you.

“ Mr. CHINESE,

“ Concerning your erecting a theatre at Pekin I have only mentioned tragedy; but, besides entertaining the public with the dead, the living must also be brought on the stage; and you will find much less difficulty in forming your comic establishment than the tragic: you may easily pick up a company which shall make the audience laugh.

“ Provide a jester, a fop, a lover, a lawyer, a usurer, a footman, a mistress, a go-between, a notary, a priest, &c. and, if these actors do but all agree to murder their parts, in which they will want but little instruction, your comedies will always have a crowded house.

“ As to the subjects, it is not at all necessary to observe any method in the conduct of them, as was formerly the way; or, rather fill your plays with little unconnected scenes.

“ Do not put your audience to the trouble of reflecting, but divert them so that they may hear out a whole comedy, from the beginning till the end, without being obliged to make the least use of their understanding.

“ There is no need that the actor express himself on the stage in the way of the world; the stage is not to be in the model of real conversation; that would be too natural: rather make use of big bombastic words, and especially of *antitheses*.

“ A languid play should be enlivened with the scene of a drunkard; and he is to distort his face, like  
“ one

“ one possessed : a vast deal of morality lies in this ;  
 “ and, as a sketch of sublime comedy, if his grimaces  
 “ have no effect, lay him asleep in an easy chair : this  
 “ never fails to keep the audience awake, especially  
 “ if he snores harmoniously. Should the sot meet  
 “ with a cold reception, replace him with a publican :  
 “ and, if he does not set the audience a laughing,  
 “ bring in a gang of thieves, or highwaymen. There  
 “ is no conceiving how such scenes are liked by persons  
 “ of taste, and especially how very instructive they  
 “ are ; for young people, whom example excites to  
 “ love the bottle, are put on a reformation by these  
 “ representations of drunkenness : and a farther relief  
 “ to the play would be to introduce a bawdy-  
 “ house.

“ Some prison intrigues would not be amiss, espe-  
 “ cially if you could give a natural exhibition of all  
 “ the abominations carried on in those places.

“ But, when you are for something still more  
 “ striking, set your actors together by the ears ; for,  
 “ though killing be not allowed of by the rules of  
 “ comedy, there may be as much knocking down as  
 “ the author pleases. However, it is of no small im-  
 “ portance to pitch on proper persons to be knocked  
 “ down : this is the very criterion of a dramatic  
 “ author’s discernment.

“ For instance if you could procure a French fop,  
 “ and rub him down thoroughly with an oaken towel,  
 “ such a play, you may be sure, would have a long  
 “ run ; not to mention how much it would improve  
 “ the nation’s morals.

“ Avoid truth and nature in your representations,  
 “ as much as possible : if the first managers of the  
 “ theatre ever kept close to those rules, it was owing  
 “ to their want of taste and genius ; the times likewise  
 “ were rude and simple.

“ The more ingenious moderns have struck into a  
 “ different method, sprightliness and wit ; so that at  
 “ present a single play requires as much wit, as would  
 “ formerly have made fifty. What if there was more  
 “ good sense in one ancient play than in fifty modern,

“ wit

“ wit must certainly be the thing, for it is that alone  
“ which raises a clap, and establishes an author’s re-  
“ putation.

“ Be very careful to disfigure whatever vices you  
“ bring upon the stage. For instance, if he be a miser,  
“ a gamester, a liar, a misanthrope, a bigot, exaggerate  
“ all these characters, so as nothing of them may be  
“ known.

“ Let your comedy exhibit the world in its most  
“ nauseous and detestable scenes; a copy should, by all  
“ means, represent the whole of the original.

“ Charge your pieces as much as you can; blend  
“ two or three intrigues together at once, and espe-  
“ cially without relation or connection; see that they  
“ be all confusion and obscurity; and leave the spec-  
“ tator to find them out.

“ But to insure the success of all your comedies,  
“ you must have a footman, with some droll name or  
“ other; he must be an arch fellow, and the chief  
“ character of the piece. He is to seduce women for  
“ his master, procure him money, marry him, put  
“ him in a way of contracting debts; he must have a  
“ keen wit, never be at a loss for expedients; in a  
“ word, he must be such a footman as never was  
“ known.

“ Inquire into the characters of persons of eminence;  
“ bring them on the stage in such a semblance that  
“ there can be no mistake in them, and thus expose  
“ them to the laughter of the town: as for any virtues  
“ they have, no matter; your business is to pick  
“ out their faults, and display them in a ridiculous  
“ light.

“ You are not always to keep to worldly affairs;  
“ sometimes religion must be a part of your drama,  
“ especially its ministers: and a mock sermon, by way  
“ of entertainment, will not fail of pleasing, especially  
“ the upper regions.

“ Exhibit heaven in a ridiculous light: then a  
“ comedy, however defective in other points, will be  
“ sure to take; for the world is full of people who  
“ are never more delighted than when God and his  
“ faints

“ saints are made a jest of. Especially, mind not to  
 “ omit the ceremonies of religion, processions, fune-  
 “ rals, &c.

“ Should the audience be so dull as not to laugh at  
 “ a mockery of religion, try the law : this is an in-  
 “ haustible subject ; and you need only expose it in  
 “ the persons of its iniquitous practitioners.

“ Away with all scruples about bringing on the  
 “ stage the most libidinous and immoral subjects. If  
 “ the spectators are pleased with such enormities, so  
 “ much the worse for them. After all, it is their own  
 “ fault that such portraitures make them vicious.  
 “ Your meaning is to amend them ; and, in theatrical  
 “ morality, intention is every thing.

“ On this principle, you need not be qualmish about  
 “ bringing a girl in an indecent posture on the stage :  
 “ nay, you may have a bed set up there, and, after  
 “ undressing herself, she may lie down, waiting her  
 “ wished-for lover ; or, if you will heighten the scene,  
 “ bring the lover in, let him throw off his clothes,  
 “ and go to bed to her. You may indeed contrive  
 “ some little incident for drawing the curtains, that  
 “ the spectator may not see the whole transaction,  
 “ but only know that it is going on behind the  
 “ scenes.

“ That debauchery may appear the more hateful,  
 “ do not forget kisses ; they are essentially necessary  
 “ on the stage, to answer that noble end : but that  
 “ this morality may strike deeper, the actor, in em-  
 “ bracing a woman, must fix his mouth on hers, and  
 “ vibrating one another in this posture, make the kiss  
 “ last three minutes ; the time limited, by the rules of  
 “ the drama, for a theatrical kiss. This vice is cer-  
 “ tainly to be exploded ; and how can kisses be better  
 “ exploded than by kissing ?

“ When you perceive that kisses do not sufficiently  
 “ affect the audience, allow your actors certain free-  
 “ doms. For instance, if a woman be refractory,  
 “ and will not quietly comply with her lover's desires,  
 “ though she is not to be quite ravished on the stage,  
 “ as something indecent, let her be forcibly seized  
 “ and

“ and carried off behind the scenes. Take care that  
 “ her cries, during the rape, may be heard by all the  
 “ house ; and these are gradually to abate, like those  
 “ of a woman growing faint with struggling till she  
 “ is quite spent, and, at length, yielding. Your  
 “ actor is to remain a quarter of an hour behind the  
 “ scenes with his charmer, then appear again with  
 “ a triumphant strut, to see what impression this  
 “ lively exhibition has made on the modest young  
 “ ladies, who frequent the play-house to learn  
 “ virtue.

“ As to expressions, the most obscene will not be  
 “ amiss ; nay, they will inspire the greater horror  
 “ for that kind of guilt : foul names are likewise  
 “ used with good effect ; *son of a whore, strumpet,*  
 “ *ugly dog*, are excellent for giving a strict purity to  
 “ the mind, and modesty to conversation, which is  
 “ a great preparative for disposing the heart to  
 “ virtue.

“ Be sure to have some political comedies in ridi-  
 “ cule of the government, and for reviling neighbour-  
 “ ing nations ; for these pieces are found greatly to  
 “ amend a people's morals. Herein you may make a  
 “ footman speak like a minister of state, and a mi-  
 “ nister of state like an idiot. Foreigners may per-  
 “ haps stare at such impropriety ; but an English  
 “ spectator sees clearly into the mystery, and knows  
 “ the author's drift.

“ Your actors must not only know how to speak,  
 “ but likewise have a smack of singing ; for, where  
 “ a piece tires, the audience are to be revived with  
 “ quaverings. The moral of the song need not suit  
 “ that of the play, as, if the play be censorious, and  
 “ its scope to set the heart against illicit love, the  
 “ verse must be soft and voluptuous : this, in the  
 “ musical dialect, is called the stage counterpoint.

“ No comedy without a marriage, and it must al-  
 “ ways conclude the piece ; otherwise you commit an  
 “ unpardonable fault, marriage being a principal part  
 “ of sterling comedy ; and what indeed is a fitter sub-  
 “ ject



“ jest for laughter than matrimony? but it is to be  
 “ hoped, that in time, by the growing improvements  
 “ in the morality of the stage, it will be utterly ex-  
 “ ploded, and, instead of that servile yoke, the free-  
 “ dom of concubinage will come into vogue.

“ Dancers you cannot be without; they give a bad  
 “ play a lift, and animate the audience partly to imi-  
 “ tate them: but take care that your chief dancers be  
 “ none of the figuring class. Avoid, as much as pos-  
 “ sible, all ballets of serious tenderness, and solemn  
 “ elegance; for your fine dancing vitiates the taste.  
 “ Only be very mindful, that your dancers skip and  
 “ caper lustily; and being used to your manner, it  
 “ will be best to keep them till they lame themselves,  
 “ or break their neck.

“ Besides your tragic and comic actors, a com-  
 “ pany of mutes must be got for acting panto-  
 “ mimes.

“ These performances must abound in wit, and be  
 “ conducted with delicate invention, and all to illus-  
 “ trate the pranks of a wretched buffoon, called *Har-*  
 “ *lequin*, who is courting a suitable personage, named  
 “ *Columbine*. Thus furnished with every dramatic  
 “ implement, you may attain the very summit of dra-  
 “ matic glory, and act *Genius*\* itself in person.”

## LETTER XXVII.

*The Mandarin Ni-ou-san, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi,  
 at London.*

Lisbon.

**T**HIS kingdom is even above Most Christian;  
 it is called *Most Faithful*: the head of the Chris-  
 tian religion, however, begins to look on it as tainted  
 with heresy, the court of Rome having several articles  
 of heavy complaint against it. The first is for having,  
 as it were, made a parody of the farce of the Holy See;

38

\* The English have a pantomime so called.

as what thou wouldst little think, Lisbon, at this present time, has a pope, cardinals, *monsignori*, and the whole train of the sacred chapter.

The king of Portugal confers the triple crown, *in partibus*, on one of his mandarins; and makes cardinals, who are stiled princes of the church; a nomination to which St. Peter's successor claims an exclusive right.

A second injury is, the late seizing of one of his ministers, or nuncios, and forcibly carrying him out of the kingdom by a party of soldiers: an unprecedented act, and God knows where it may end; for, if once the concerns of Rome fall into military hands, it is over with the holy see.

## LETTER XXVIII.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kie-tou-na,  
at Pekin.*

London.

SOME months ago was executed, one of the chief ministers of the British crown. The populace, for it was they who tried him, condemned him to be put to death in effigy. I here send you the representation of his execution, with his carcase hanging at the gallows.

The cause of this severe sentence was written in large characters on a paper at his breast; *For injuring the freedom and honour of the British nation.*

Near the gibbet, where the right honourable malefactor hung, was placed the *Magna Charta* of England, which has caused many such executions.

But, for the sake of transmitting to posterity a signal warning to bad ministers, he has been raised from the dead, and hanged again, in all the blazonry of his rank. At this second execution he was hanged with the king's death-warrant covering his star, and the devil being hanged: all the court were present, and appeared very much affected with this minister's ignominious catastrophe.

Very probably this will not be the last exhibition of him:

him: before he dies he may undergo half a dozen hangings more. I have heard of another English minister of state, who was burnt again and again whilst living, and at last died of a cold.

Restless, audacious, and turbulent, as these people are, the government, however, has a great advantage on its side; for it is only letting them make prints, and hiss at eminent placemen, and they will submit to the heaviest imposts. A government, which will but wink at the ebullitions of their spleen, may tax their very skins.

## LETTER XXIX.

*The Same to the Same; at Pekin.*

London.

**T**HE merchants of the city of London, who at first exclaimed vehemently against the peace, went some days ago to compliment the king.

“SIR,

“WE, your majesty's most faithful subjects, the merchants of the city of London, as in duty bound, and filled with respect and affection for your royal person, come with our humble thanks to your majesty for that constant protection we always enjoyed from the throne during the war, and for your paternal care in giving us peace, &c. &c. &c.

“We have had the satisfaction to see a war founded on justice and necessity, and carried on with vigour and glory, at length terminated to the benefit of the nation.”

This harangue is the very reverse of what is said on the Exchange, and is openly contradicted by the unanimous voice of the public on the east side of Temple-Bar.

They, who are against the peace, aver that this complimenting company was no more than the tail of the

the merchants without a head, and that all the proceedings of a body without a chief are accounted void and of no effect.

The lord-mayor, who is the head of the mercantile society, very prudently was sick that day; for having, as is said, sworn that he would never approve of giving back all the important conquests, he thus avoided forswearing himself.

This congratulation, however, tho' it came something late, and, as it were, by stealth, has given some countenance to the court system, which began to look very blank: so little a matter sufficed here for strengthening one party and weakening the other, that a meeting of some merchants at a tavern, and their proceeding from thence to wait on the king, will turn the scale.

## LETTER XXX.

*The Mandarin Ni-ou-fan, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi at London.*

*Lisbon.*

**P**ORTUGAL was growing opulent and powerful, when it happened to find a vast treasure in America, which totally ruined it. The Portuguese sent black men into the new world, who fell to digging the ground, and every year remitted very considerable sums. Nothing could be thought of better adapted to impoverish their employers.

Gold and silver being but signs of value, the more these increase, the more of them is required to procure what they represent.

About two hundred years ago one might purchase, for an ounce of gold, what now will cost twenty-two ounces. The cause of this is, there being two and twenty times more of that metal than there was in those days.

If the Portuguese mines may be supposed to yield, in two centuries, the same quantity of gold as they have

have hitherto, forty four ounces will then purchase no more than what four hundred years ago might have been purchased for one ounce; and should Portugal double the working of its mines, and the produce be answerable, the sooner will it be ruined.

One might easily predict the overthrow of this monarchy, and form an exact computation in what century it will be utterly undone; that is, in what century an exuberance of riches will reduce it to extreme poverty.

### LETTER XXXI.

*The Mandarin Chiam-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kie-tou-na, at Pekin.*

London.

**S**INCE the last war, most of king George's subjects are so far mangled and mutilated, that many of them are reduced to half their body.

I was lately in company with eight British officers, just come from Germany, who, all together, had but four eyes, five arms and three legs: so that to make them whole men they wanted twelve eyes, eleven arms, one hundred and ten fingers and toes, thirteen feet, and as many calves of legs.

Go where you will, you meet with crutches.

Thou wilt be apt to think that these Britons must be not a little chagrined at such mutilations: so far from it, that they account it matter of glory. Most of these hardy invalids are so proud of being thus dismembered, that they would rather chuse to remain *in statu quo* than be unnoticed, as they were before the war, with all their limbs about them. Their mutilation gives them an existence which they had not when whole and entire.

Many a military gentleman, who, before the war, was not minded, being without any other merit than two feet and two hands, is now taken notice of, because



cause he has the honour to have an artificial arm, or a wooden leg.

Other men die all at once ; the military men, piecemeal : some are interred six or seven times before their conclusive burial.

## LETTER XXXII.

*The Same, to the Same, at Pekin.*

London.

**B**ESIDES the multitude of vices in European companies, they swarm with faults. Now the difference between the former and the latter is, that faults disturb the order of society, whereas vices make it quite insupportable.

Men and women are all stamped with some flaw or defect, as familiar to them as their very name, and by which they might be distinguished. Every individual, if I may be allowed the expression, wears the livery of some ridicule or other.

In Asia the permanency of customs, and the confinement of women, cause an uniformity of manners and behaviour ; so that both virtues and vices are general. In one single man you see a whole people ; whereas, in European nations, there are as many imperfections as persons, and as many persons as faults.

Some days ago, the Baronet introduced me into a large company of both sexes ; and having seated ourselves in a corner of the apartment, I began my usual questions.

Who is that young Englishman standing next to the mistress of the house ? That, answered he, is a blab ; a character originally French, but begins to be naturalised in our island. His chief aim, in obtaining favours from women, is only to proclaim his triumphs. He would not give a rush to enjoy the finest woman in the world, could he not entertain the public with the narrative of his amours.

Who is that perpetual talker next him ? He is a mere talker—another character imitated from a Paris original. He has a complete assortment of small-talk, with which he feasts his hearers: he gives regularly audiences at some coffee-houses, and never fails being surrounded with gaping admirers. He usually sets out with an account of his last night's dream, adding a profound interpretation of it: he next proceeds to the weather, which he accompanies with observations on the unsettledness of the seasons; then enters on the grand concern of the play-bills for the day; gives an analysis of the play, with the history of the actors and actresses who are to perform the principal parts. If, unfortunately for the company, he was at the opera the night before, that is a fund for four hours loquacity: the dress of every gentleman and lady whom he knew, is particularly described; besides genealogical and critical digressions.

Pray tell me who is he yonder, so liberal of his bowing and smiling at every body? He, answered the Baronet, is a flatterer, and pliant as a withy; an Irish character, the father of which was Poverty and the mother Indigence; but now so thoroughly naturalised in England, that one would think it to be of English growth. This man, instead of having a will of his own, is turned and winded by that of others. On any one, whom he hears praised, he bestows his commendations: if one of the company says that a woman is pretty, he adds, She is really adorable; but, should one of a different mind say, I see no beauty in her, he immediately owns she is an antidote to desire. He is ever ready to do what one would have him; either to stay in town, or go into the country. Be it Rome, Paris, or Constantinople, he will go with you wherever you will; or live with you in a lonely house on a waste: it is all alike to him, only speak the word.

And that other on his right hand, note his modulations and gestures: he is a fine speaker, which is near a-kin to a mere babler. From the volubility of his tongue he had been considered as of French extraction,  
but

but he has proved himself of English lineage ; and that, for many ages past, none of his family were ever tongue-tied. Some say this character is a copy of the parliamentary debates. This creature is spending himself all the day long in words. On hearing a fact related, Excuse me, says he, interrupting the persons, you are mistaken ; it was otherwise ; you omit an essential circumstance :—and hereupon he falls to repeating all that has been said, with the super-addition of a multitude of insignificant *parentheses* : at last he comes to a conclusion, but immediately engages in a second narrative, or dissertation, which lasts till the company breaks up.

And that countryman of yours, as I dare say he is, on our right, with a something of a stare in his looks ? —Why, in plain terms, he is a stupid creature. Stupidity is a mental heaviness, influencing the actions of the soul, so as to give them an ill appearance : now, this is a defect not uncommon among us, and perhaps owing to the density of our air.

He, whom you see there has eyes without sight, and ears without hearing. If the conversation turns on a point of any difficulty, he muses, and then gives his opinion, many minutes after the company has done speaking of it, and has called another subject. In playing at cards he commits a thousand oversights, and thus, besides losing his own money, makes others lose theirs. He goes the wrong way to work in every thing ; his very looks betray stupidity.

That young lord behind him, with so much pride and conceitedness in his countenance ? —His character is rude impertinence : he deals much in such ambiguities as, without being downright obscene, are indecent ; he makes it his business to put women to the blush.

He never goes to the play till the curtain is drawn up, and every body seated, to be the more taken notice of ; then he talks so loud that all the house hear him, and thus naturally turn their eyes towards him.

And, pray, who is this spark standing before us ?—Faith, I know not what to make of him, answered my guide ; for some among us are anonymous creatures ; so that a dictionary of characters will soon be wanting. In the mean time, the person in question may be called a busy man : the most ridiculous part in this folly is, that it is generally found in people who have nothing at all to do. If you propose the spending a few days out of London, his answer is, that the country is fit only for men of pleasure, but that, for his part, he is so overwhelmed with business, as not to have a single day at his disposal. He envies the leisure of some of his acquaintance, who can saunter away four hours every day in the Park : this is a felicity, which he despairs of its ever being his good fortune to attain to. He is always on the wing ; so that, if you meet him in the streets, it is much if he has time to give you a hat ; but, as for affording you a word, his hurry is too great.

Who is he that is now speaking to the man of so much business ? He, answered the Baronet, is a creature eaten up with superstition ; a character which one would think peculiar to Spain and Italy, where religion vitiates the mind ; but this foible in England has no connection with the church. It may surprise you, but there are people here, who do not so much as believe a God, and yet are superstitious ! This man, on some left-handed servant's breaking a looking-glass, has been known immediately to go to a notary to settle his affairs, and make his will, as if it was a prognostic of some fatal accident befalling him : he turns pale at two knives being laid crosswise. It is not long since he declined a very advantageous match, only because the overture was made to him on a Friday, holding it to be an ominous day.

There is a man who comes up familiarly to every one, and mingles abruptly in all the parties : who can he be ?—Why, he is a troublesome fellow. What is that ? How ! replied he, don't you know that character ? Well, then I will let you into it. A troublesome fellow is one who either knows not, or minds not,  
the

the decencies of society ; who pesters you with his frequent visits, and mistimes them ; who seems to mind only one thing, being troublesome. He, whom you see there, has successively tired and vexed all the women in London. Farther, such pests of society cause an increase of expence : you must keep a porter, were it only to hinder them from bolting into your house whenever it is their good pleasure.

Who is he, making a leg to the master of the house, and with something mistrustful in his looks ?—You have hit the nail on the head ; he mistrusts every body, even his nearest relations : then he is unhappy accordingly ; he has not a friend in the world, for friendship abominates reserve. He is in perpetual fear that his servants will rob him, or his mistress deceive him : he suspects his cook, dreads his lawyer, and is afraid of his wine-merchant. On the road he fears he shall be robbed and murdered, and thus *dies every hour*, from the dread of dying.

And he, said I, who is just now speaking to that suspicious wretch, what is he ? A character nearly allied to that of a troublesome fellow ; but rather more vexatious.

He comes to see you at the very time when you are with somebody in private ; takes a chair without being desired, and says, I hope I do not intrude on you ; or, I will be gone : however, down he squats himself, and there sits. It is expected he will soon take his leave ; but his patience exceeds yours, and he sticks by you till the person with whom you had business is gone.

If two persons, having a mutual tenderness for each other, but who cannot meet every day, have concerted measures to spend an hour together, he is sure to be with them, and narrowly watch their motions. He does not mind yawning, or any other intimations, or even broad signs that his going away would be acceptable ; but stays with them till they are on taking leave ; then indeed he leaves them to curse him.

I observe there a man before us, ogling a lady, and



looking very sourly at all who cast an eye on her.—He is jealous ; a character not at all common in London, where women are entitled to do what they think fit, and men are not to mind what they do. What jealousy is you must know ; that is a kind of Asiatic quality : so I need not say any more of it.

Here is a great man : he scarce vouchsafes a nod to all the low bows made to him.—He is eaten up with pride ; speaking only by monosyllables : he seems to think himself above all mankind ; his servants he gives orders to only by signs : he would hide the meanness of his birth by the most stately and assuming behaviour ; or rather, he is so vain and lofty, as not to believe himself his father's real son.

Indulge me in a few questions more, said I to the Baronet, and I have done. Who is that gentlewoman near the chimney, who aims at being witty ?—She is one of the learned, answered he ; a character far from being common in our island, our women having the modesty to own they know nothing. She is a perpetual reader, minds neither plays, the public walks, nor any diversion : all her time is bestowed on books. It is not from any sense of the worth of knowledge that she takes all this pains, but purely to be reckoned a woman of learning ; and withal she is so indiscreet as to enter into dispute with every new comer, especially strangers. It is to this vanity she sacrifices every pleasure and diversion. However, peace be to her pride ; for she is punished in her very endeavours to gratify it.

There is a young lady continually flirting about from place to place ; who can she be ?—She is a gadder : at least, I know no other word in our language fits her better : she is the perpetual motion, here and there, and every where : in the morning she drives away to Kensington ; at noon you see her in the Park ; in the evening at one play-house or other, and sometimes at two : her house is the only place where she is not to be met with. Her husband has never seen her there since his wedding-day.

Sir,

Sir, said I to my guide, I observe a third lady yonder, who seems to be something fickle ; for within this quarter of an hour she has hastily gone up to three or four persons, and quitted them as abruptly. She, answered the Baronet, is a humourist ; a character which, in England, is generally accompanied with beauty : an ugly woman, who should affect caprice, would be laughed at : that is a privilege allowed only to beauty.

This vice springs from that of men : the women perfectly read in their eyes the pleasure they have to see them so capricious.

She whom you see near her, continued the Baronet, is so volatile, that you may sooner fix mercury : I can compare her only to a butterfly, wantoning about the flame of love. Indeed, the scandalous chronicle says, that she has sometimes burnt herself ; but even that has not fixed her : all the burnings in the world will not cure her of gadding.

She who is standing there before us, and who seems to despise every body, is actuated by a spirit of disdain. Mention a person whom every body allows to be a fine gentleman, she immediately signifies, by some grimace or other, that she thinks otherwise : her looks, her very voice, betray a malignancy. If any thing be praised, she, to be sure, has some fault to find with it : if a jewel be shewn, and the whole company express their admiration of it, she takes it in her turn, views it as the others have done, and gives it to the owner without saying a word, whatever she may think.

She next to the scornful lady, is an old maid, of a fluctuating temper. Twenty years ago a very advantageous offer was made to her ; but, her answer being really no answer, the gentleman married another, till she should know her own mind : and, his spouse dying, he renewed his proposal ; but her answer being no more to the point than before, he married a second lady : at present he has a third wife ; and, in all likelihood, he and his wife and children will be all under ground,

before she knows whether she will marry him or not.

That lady, now behind the irresolute maid, is a cross-grained creature, perpetually scolding: her servants soon give her warning; it is impossible for any chambermaid breathing to live with her: she must be on the wrangle from morning till night; there is no being at peace with her but by a continual war. Her very element seems to be the plaguing both herself and others.

She who is now speaking to her, is a back-biter; a character pretty common among our English women, who, though they talk little, back-bite a great deal. That woman knows as many anecdotes as will supply scandal from one end of the year to the other. I happened lately to be in company where she was; and somebody saying that a young lady of her acquaintance had purchased a very fine brilliant; I am not a stranger to it, said she: the gentleman from whom she had it, offered it to me at the same price she had it: but I don't buy my diamonds at any such rate. If a lady is said to have made an impression on the heart of a prince, she immediately takes up the word, saying, I readily believe it; for she, who goes above half way towards what virtue forbids, will get there sooner than others. This is her usual way of speaking.

The woman on the left of the last, with something assuming in her carriage, is full of conceit, affecting a superiority above all the women of her rank: there is no distinction at court, or in the fashionable world, to which she thinks herself not entitled. If a lady of the first rank in the world be brought on the carpet, she indicates, by a shrug, that she thinks her but a poor creature: if a certain woman be spoken of as having a great share of beauty, wit, and agreeableness, she says nothing, out of modesty, being persuaded that such praises belong only to herself.

## LETTER XXXIII.

*The Mandarin Ni-ou-fan, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi,  
at London.*

Lisbon.

**T**HE Portugal trade is transacted by barter: it gives the English gold, and the returns are made in manufactures. It was one Cromwell, a great politician, who brought about this treaty, which has given Great-Britain an exclusive privilege of ruining Portugal. The Portugal trade is one of the most considerable revenues belonging to the crown of England: the figure she makes in Europe is not a little owing to the Brasil gold.

Its industry supplies it with soldiers: its cloths and woollen stuffs procure whatever forces it wants.

England is the gulph into which all the treasures of Portugal empty themselves.

To enrich only one government is but bad policy: there is less danger in a people's impoverishing itself in favour of several, the dissipation of its riches through various channels still preserving its poverty in a kind of equipoise; so that it need not fear the forces of one single state. In point of ambition it is a general rule, that there is less danger in that of several princes than of one only.

It is very seldom, that the general community league together against one single government; because, when conquered, there is more difficulty in settling the pretensions of the conquerors than in the conquest itself.

## LETTER XXXIV.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kie-tou-na,  
at Pekin.*

London.

**T**HE plenipotentiary of France, being dismissed, has put forth a pamphlet, to inform the public that he has behaved amiss. He justifies himself with so much candour and frankness, that every body must be convinced he was in the wrong. He arraigns and condemns himself without naming any one of his accomplices. Such is his modesty, that he does not so much as accuse those, who, after tumbling him into this plunge, would not lend an hand to draw him out: a rare instance indeed in a minister, that, after ruining himself by too much passion, he has the temper to be silent on the very article, which might have cleared him both with the court and the public.

## LETTER XXXV.

*A*

*The Same, to the Same, at Pekin.*

London.

**I**N Europe, it is not always that wars and disturbances are detrimental to the national finances.

There is at present a king in Europe, whom all the world thought the war must have ruined: and behold, on the peace, he is found full of money!

With this I send you the copy of a letter from an Englishman at Berlin, to his friend at London: it will shew thee that there are some sovereigns so dexterous, as to turn their very misfortunes to their advantage.

“ DEAR



“ DEAR COUNTRYMAN,

“ This kingdom, which before the war was the a-  
“ bode of indigence, and nothing but meanness and  
“ poverty to be seen in it, is now the very theatre of  
“ opulence and splendour. The sieges and battles so  
“ destructive to a great part of Germany, have  
“ raised Prussia to an unknown degree of prospe-  
“ rity.

“ Amidst all the losses and sufferings of other states,  
“ this has been a considerable gainer. France, Britain,  
“ and the house of Austria, have contracted immense  
“ debts; whereas this monarchy has cleared all its in-  
“ cumbrances. Should any sudden incident oblige  
“ those three powers to take up arms again, not one  
“ of them would be able to raise an army. There is  
“ only the king of Prussia who is in a condition to re-  
“ new the war.

“ The subsidies which we have paid to this mo-  
“ narch, turned to better account than his taking a  
“ score of cities.

“ The conquering of an additional state without  
“ finances, far from encreasing his power, would ra-  
“ ther have contributed to the diminution of it. En-  
“ glish money is what has given a real addition to  
“ his strength. I dare say, not less than one tenth  
“ part of our specie has been melted down in  
“ his.

“ Formerly there was but one king of Prussia; at  
“ present there are millions of Frederics\*. If this  
“ prince spread terror and consternation when almost  
“ alone and moneyless, well may Europe fear him  
“ when now he is backed by such multitudes of little  
“ monarchs.

“ It must be owned, that, with all our genius in o-  
“ ther respects, we are the most bungling politicians  
“ in the universe. Whatever the inclinations and mili-  
“ tary virtues of this prince may be, he never should

\* A coin so called.

“ have

“ have been enabled to exceed the limits set to him by  
 “ his original incapacity. Money was the only thing  
 “ he wanted, and with that we have abundantly sup-  
 “ plied him.

“ God grant, that so many Frederics may not one  
 “ day conspire against king George ; and that the  
 “ king of Prussia may not take into his head to think  
 “ the electorate of Hanover would be a pretty additi-  
 “ on to his dominions !”

### LETTER XXXVI.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Superintendent of  
 Religion at Peking.*

London.

**T**HERE is in this kingdom a branch of popula-  
 tion, with which France has supplied it ; I mean  
 that of the protestant refugees.

Blind superstition, which has ever been fatal to states,  
 laid the first foundations of this foreign propagation,  
 so beneficial to England. It is a passage of history ve-  
 ry well deserving our court's consideration ; and, as  
 such, I shall give thee a brief account of it, sui-  
 tably to the limits which I have prescribed to my let-  
 ters.

After that great revolution, by which the religion  
 of Christ was divided into two parts ; the sovereign  
 and subjects, in several states of Europe, entered into  
 conventions and treaties. The Reformed purchased  
 of their kings the privilege of worshipping God accord-  
 ing to their ritual ; and articles of stipulation were drawn  
 up. The crown of France, by an authentic edict,  
 granted to its separatists the free exercise of their reli-  
 gion : all commotions were at an end, and every body  
 lived quietly under the observance of the pacific edict,  
 when one of the kings took it into his head to break  
 the treaty, repealing the edict, and prohibiting the  
 Reformed from holding any religious assemblies : their  
 churches were pulled down, and they were ordered to  
 believe

believe in the mass ; however, the conversion of them requiring missionaries, the soldiery were sent among them, who preached the eucharist with their bayonets at the end of their pieces.

The motive of this intestine war was to re-instate what is called in France the *sainte hostie* ; and the soldiers at first endeavoured by kicks and cuffs to cram down the reality of Christ's body, which Luther and Calvin had conveyed out of the tabernacle of the Romish church. But, the military missionaries being thought too tardy in their conversions, the court of France set the executioners to work : great numbers of Christians were hanged, that their brethren might be brought to acknowledge, as Christ's successor, him whom they accounted Antichrist.

None are converted to a new sect by punishments ; it is always of their own free-will that renegadoes are such : penalties are by no means a good way to explode any belief as false and groundless. The martyrs for religion are esteemed as so many standards of its verity : the more cruelty is used to extirpate a religion, the more tenacious people are of it. Sects may be compared to metals in the crucible ; those which stand the fire are good. But the match being not at all equal, and all petitions abruptly rejected, nothing was left to the Reformed, but to think of a shelter.

The persecutors even hanged up, with the most ignominious circumstances, those whom they intercepted removing to some country, where they should be allowed to worship God according to their belief ; nay, these clandestine escapes of the Reformed enflamed their enemies more than ever, and produced two ordinances, which could not have been exceeded in the most barbarous ages ; one forbidding the Reformed to leave the country, and the other enjoining them to worship God with all the ceremonies and superstition of the Romish church. In the mean time, both gibbets and gallies threatened them every where : however, great numbers had the good luck to escape.

Couldst

Could'st thou ever have thought, that Europe had princes who so little understood their interest ? Indeed France soon smarted for this imprudence. Industry, which, ever since the revival of arts, had settled in this kingdom as its natural mansion, removed into other states, where it was received with open arms : this monarchy then ceased being the centre of European luxury. Every government set up manufactures, and thus supplied itself. No wonder France has been much weaker since this emigration ; it was cutting off one of its arms.

Never would Lewis XIV. the king above mentioned have entertained a thought of doing himself so much hurt ; for here it is not often that princes are the cause of the mischief which they do : but he had a mistress and a confessor, who agreed together in ruining the state. Now for this, a mistress alone is always found sufficient : then what must it be when a confessor sets his shoulder to the work ?

### LETTER XXXVII.

*The Mandarin Ni-cu-san, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi,  
at London.*

Lisbon.

**A**RTS and trades have no place in this kingdom : the Portuguese are neuter in what products of industry they have, these being brought to them in ships from England and Holland. As to themselves, they are no more than lookers-on, without any other business than doing nothing ; as if Portugal had given a commission to the other nations of Europe to ruin it, and depended on their care for the executing of such commission.

In this capital there are not less than ten or twelve thousand foreigners, who come hither from their own country on purpose to strip the state of its wealth. The Portuguese see them get fortunes, and suddenly disappear, without ever having a thought of learning  
from

from them the ways of growing rich, or, at least, of earning a livelihood.

A few Portuguese, of a more active cast than others, ask leave of these foreigners to carry on some little business; and they are indulged in it, whilst they keep within the limits of mediocrity.

In Turkey, the Jews are the agents of trade: here, it is in English hands.

On the arrival of the Brazil fleets, the proprietors, who are chiefly of that nation, divide the treasures of those new worlds according to their respective shares; then for feasts, balls, and entertainments of all kinds: the Portuguese, amidst their poverty, composedly view these scenes of splendour and profusion, and take it as a compliment that they are admitted to the dissipation of their own riches.

I question, whether it would not be now too late to rid themselves of these foreigners: there are abuses, which, in length of time, interweave themselves with the very national system; and Portugal, to do without those who are now beggaring it, must be taken to pieces, and put together in a new manner.

### LETTER XXXVIII.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kie-tou-na, at Pekin.*

London.

**T**HE court party is distinguished from the country champions by sure and certain marks; and the Baronet has let me into them: some are as follow.

**Infalible Rules for knowing a King's Man.**

“ A slender puny Englishman, with a meagre palish face, and something of a French look, is a courtier.  
 “ One, who wears his hair short and clipped, like the head of a shoc's dog, with two locks hanging down

“ on



“ on each side, below the ears, with large curls at  
 “ the end, and the whole covered with scented powder, is a King’s man.

“ A supporter of the Italian opera, and a frequenter  
 “ of the two play-houses of Covent-Garden and  
 “ Drury-Lane, may be concluded a King’s man. As  
 “ to the *London Cuckolds*, every honest English patriot  
 “ may go to it, consistently with his title, that piece  
 “ being intirely agreeable to English freedom.”

#### Infalible Rules for knowing a Common-wealth’s- Man.

“ A face half an ell long, and three quarters broad,  
 “ indicates a Common-wealth’s-man. A Briton, who,  
 “ on taking another by the hand, shakes his arm  
 “ enough to dislocate it, may be concluded a Com-  
 “ monwealth’s-man, such having twenty times the  
 “ strength of a Royalist.

“ He, who talks hastily, and with an accent of  
 “ acrimony; who, as it were, disdains mildness,  
 “ courtesy, or politeness, is certainly a Common-  
 “ wealth’s-man.

“ If he makes use of indiscreet expressions, is  
 “ vehement in his elocution, and interlards curses  
 “ against those of the opposite party, these are Re-  
 “ publican qualities.

“ A stiff gait, coarseness of deportment, and blunt-  
 “ ness of speech, likewise indicate an Opposition-  
 “ man.”

## LETTER XXXIX.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Superintendent of Religion at Peking.*

London.

**T**HERE is a pagoda here, called St. Paul's, big enough to contain half the nation, but where, in prayer-time, you scarcely see any of the natives.

One great inconveniency attending this huge Christian rendezvous is, that the women, who come to religious meetings only to see, are hardly to be seen, which makes this place very empty ; for, in Europe, men never worship God in places where women do not resort.

This prodigious edifice owes its building to the national pride and ostentation : the vanity of this people discovers itself in the very structures built for devout humiliation, as in the more immediate presence of God.

Connoisseurs in the arrangement of stones will have it, that those of St. Paul's are not laid geometrically : that I know nothing of ; but one thing I can venture to affirm, which is, that they are laid very solidly. It is the strongest fortress belonging to the Christian religion in all Europe.

The weighty good sense of the English is observable even in the appendages of their worship : London itself must be swallowed up, before this pile of stones can be destroyed.

LET-

## LETTER XL.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kie-tou-na, at Pekin.*

London.

**H**ERE the spirit of party, besides dress, manners, and behaviour, shews itself even on the table.

About a month ago, I dined with an English gentleman in the opposition; and as this party sticks to the old English cookery, all we had was a piece of roast beef and a plum-pudding.

The following week a very worthy gentleman of the court party sent me an invitation; and here I had quails, partridges, &c. besides many fine dishes I knew nothing of.

Which of these two parties deserve the preference in point of politics, I cannot pretend to say; but as to the table, the Royalists pleased me better than the Commonwealth's-men, were it only on account of indigestions; for a pudding half baked, and beef much under done, have always that effect on me.

Accordingly, when a Republican sends to invite me to dinner, my servant, who knows what suits my stomach, always gives for answer, that I am engaged; whereas, when a Royalist's footman comes on such a message, he receives him with the utmost civility, and with many compliments lets him know, that my Lord Chinese will not fail of doing himself that honour on the day appointed. He is even so delighted with this invitation, that he takes the servant to a neighbouring public house, and there gets drunk with him in consideration of the good wine I am to drink at his master's.

Another inconveniency at a Republican's table is the getting drunk, and with a thick black liquor which comes from Portugal; for, as that nation takes off vast quantities of English manufactures, the Republicans

publicans gorge themselves with the products of that country.

Another disagreeable circumstance is, that while you are getting drunk for the good of the commonwealth, you must at every bumper damn or curse some person of the contrary party; and thus the healths are changed into imprecations. Now, as it goes against me to do the least hurt to any one, I cannot find in my heart to have a share in sending to the devil a score of persons, who, for aught I know, may deserve a better place.

However, as the Royalists deal much in ragouts, and drink their wine iced; whereas the Republicans exclude all fauces, and drink their liquors in their natural state; I should prefer the latter, would they condescend to a little alteration in their cookery. My man, who has my health very much at heart, advised me to put the following advertisement in the public papers.

#### ADVERTISEMENT.

“ The Chinese gentleman, who often dines with  
“ persons of quality, and others of the city of London,  
“ makes it his humble request to those *Tories*, who  
“ intend to honour him with their invitations, that  
“ they would be pleased to let their pudding be a  
“ quarter of an hour longer in the oven, and to give  
“ a few turns of the spit more to the roast beef: he  
“ will, with equal pleasure, comply with the *Whigs*,  
“ if they will condescend to intermit their made dishes,  
“ their sweetmeats, and ice cheeses.  
“ N. B. The Chinese drinks no champagne.”

L E T.

## LETTER XLI.

*The Mandarin Ni-ou-fan, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi,  
at London.*

Lisbon.

**N**AVIGATION is no more cultivated in Portugal than the common trades: though all the concerns of this kingdom lie beyond sea, it has no shipping: the Portuguese are acquainted but with one track on the ocean; their whole navigation lies in going to America, and coming back.

The Portuguese shipping seems so much clock-work: at a certain time of the year two or three hundred wooden machines, called ships, go of themselves to the Brasils, the sailors hardly putting forth a hand: any one may do for such voyages; there is no need of being a seaman to be a sailor in their fleets.

The government has no particular navy belonging to it: all the shipping belongs to the merchants, and does not concern itself about defending the state, as indeed it is none of its business. I have been told, that the pirates of Algiers and Tripoli had laid a plot to come and carry the king of Portugal off from his palace, which lies by the river side; and I don't see why they did not put it in execution, (for they have done many bolder things) this port having no naval defence which could oppose fifty barks crowded with these desperate corsairs.

That maritime nation must be weak indeed, which cannot protect its king from the incursions of barbarians.

L E T-



## LETTER XLII.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kie-tou-na, at Peking.*

London.

**T**HERE is not a king on earth, who has it more in his power to be absolute, than a king of Great-Britain. All the European sovereigns are in pursuit of despotism, and never reach it. Amidst all their devices to make themselves independent, they continually meet with obstacles which baffle their endeavour.

In Turkey, the native land of despotism, the Janisaries are a check on the divan; in France, the parliament remonstrates; in Sweden, the senate's resolutions give the turn to public proceedings; in Spain, the inquisition curbs the prerogative; in a word, every sovereign finds himself far short of the arbitrariness which he has been driving at: whereas, in England, the shot has hit; the business is done; the great body, in which is lodged the supreme power, has been gained.

All that remains for the monarch to do, is to satisfy the people; and this is done by only complying with what they ask; and then, on his side, it is only ask and have. What the people ask is generally too trifling to be denied; a shadow of liberty makes them easy.

The main of the king's policy is to prevent or allay any fermentations in the populace. When they cry, they must be hushed; when they mutter, they must be humoured: if a minister is become odious to them, only remove him into privacy.

A king of England need only feign to have no ambition, and he may attain the objects of his most exorbitant desires; he must beware of obstinacy, as big with the worst of dangers. The Charles's and James's did not lose their crowns for willing any certain

certain thing, but because they would have it in their way. The state-quarrels, which occasion such combustions in this kingdom, instead of being about the substance, are only concerning the form : now a king will not stand upon the form of independency, whilst he is possessed of its substance.

## LETTER XLIII.



*The Same, to the Same, at Peking.*

London.

**I**N England music varies with the seasons. Winter is ushered in with all the instruments of the theatrical orchestras ; the spring music is light and airy, and mostly heard in arbours, imitating the nightingale's : summer is for a brisk and spirited symphony ; and, on the other hand, that for autumn, being a prelude to the fall of the leaf, is slow and something dull.

In the hot season there is no breathing fresh air, or taking a turn in a public garden, but amidst fiddles. In one of these gardens you drink tea by note, and sup in cadence : yet these symphonic repasts have their inconveniencies : not a few complain of restless nights, which they attribute to the *prestissimo* of their suppers ; but I, as subject to indigestions, when I eat a fowl at Vauxhall, always chuse the *andante* measure.

Serious as the English naturally are, yet, in the cities of London and Westminster alone, there is more music and musicians than in all France, which is reckoned the merriest nation in all Europe.

Having frequently observed, that the faces of those who administer to the public merriment have not the English cut, I asked the Baronet how that came about ; and his answer was as follows : All those people, said he, are foreigners : the English, though the great improvers of all other arts, have so bad an opinion of themselves in regard to music, that they think they have not genius enough to blow on a reed, to run  
their

their fingers along the handle of a fiddle, or sing a tune; and to supply this defect, they grudge no money in bringing over that multitude of pipers and fiddlers whom you see in all our places of diversion, where, in consideration of enormous payments, they condescend to tickle our ears with solos, concertos, and so on.

The universal calculators here (for such there are) affirm, that the symphonies, solos, duettos, and the whole assortment of an opera, costs us every year no less than forty thousand pounds sterling: that, you see, is paying very dear for a skill productive only of sounds.

Our quality, who affect a taste for these kinds of modulation, alledge, that it makes money circulate. Indeed, Italian music agitates our money to such a degree, as to toss it out of the kingdom: we have two or three bankers, who do little else, the whole year, than make remittances to Turin, Venice, and Florence.

But what is most ridiculous in us, added he, is pretending fondness and judgment in an art which we never learn: we not only send for the composers from Italy, but the very performers come from the same country, which makes music among us ever to be only in embryo. Never would the English have naturalised any one foreign art, had they acted in this manner with regard to those they must be owned to have improved.

We will allow the models of the tunes to come from Italy, but the execution should be English. If it be said, that this music cannot be performed but by natives of Rome, Bologna, and Naples; away with an art, the naturalisation of which will ever be hindered by physical causes: but this is evidently not the case; for we have now at London some Britons who perform to admiration on Italian instruments; and I know some English women, who trill a lay with as much agility as any songstresses Italy ever produced.

## LETTER XLIV.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kie-tou-na, at Peking.*

London. .

**I**N saying all England is in London, to be sure, only the commonalty is meant ; for the great do not live in it ; they only come hither from time to time, and *incognito*, as plain citizens, leaving at their seats all their equipage, retinue, and grandeur. The great have neither house nor home in the capital ; they quarter themselves where they can, and eat at home : a Frenchman is not more a stranger at London than a peer of the realm.

The English nobility are great only at their seats : there indeed they live splendidly, and distinguish themselves from those with whom at London they are confounded. The court of England may be said to be in the town, and the town to be in the country : it is here however that the nobility display a magnificence and state, which, in other parts of Europe, is seen only in the capital.

Every European nation has its own way of begging, and afterwards recovering itself. The French nobility, after involving themselves in difficulties at Paris, rusticate to save ; whereas, in England, they live high in the country, and the town is the place for parsimony. The French nobility are themselves at Paris, and *incognito* at their estates ; whereas the English quality are in public in the country, and live *incognito* in the capital.

Pride is likewise the spring of this rural splendour. London is too large, and too full of people, for distinction : it must be a resplendent magnificence indeed, to strike the eye in that tumultuous place ; and this would hurt eyes used only to equality : it would make the difference between citizens too glaring : this might hurt those whose situation may require a concealment of their opulence.

In the country, every great man keeps a court : he is environed by his subjects, and acts the part of a sovereign. His splendour, which at London would give offence, here keeps up the order of subordination : he is treated, at his seat, with distinction, and on the very account for which in the capital he would be looked on with an evil eye : that is surely enough to keep him out of town, and fix him to his usual residence among the worshipping villagers.

## LETTER XLV.

*The Mandarin Ni-ou-san, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi,  
at London.*

Lisbon.

**I**N other states of Europe the government is continually put to difficulties in settling the finances : that is a trouble the Portuguese ministry are free from, there being no finances here. They need not rack their brains to prevent any embezzlement of the public money ; the business is done to their hands ; the administration itself throws every thing into disorder, even by permitting a stagnation of that industry, by which alone money can be kept in the kingdom.

Lisbon may be looked on as the office for the general distribution of gold. Besides the national want of subsistence, and the continual necessity of parting with all its specie to live, there are other outlets.

Gold is a merchandize, here, bought and sold again ; and in order to assure sale and exportation, the government gives such good weight, that there is always a gain for the exporter. The domestic finances of the crown are in no better condition than those of the public ; palpable malversations reduce the king's revenue to a slender pittance.

There is scarce a projector in Europe, who does not make a property of the crown of Portugal.

Its ambassadors and residents at foreign courts look out for idle persons, who have a genius for nothing



but projects and systems. Lisbon swarms with foreign pensioners, dead weights, except spending a settled income. All recompences in Portugal are for life; that is to say, every pensioner is entitled to squander away the finances of the state, till death puts an end to his necessities.

## LETTER XLVI.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kie-tou-na, at Pekin.*

London.

**A** Kingdom, where the people is distressed for food, may much more properly be called the land of Slavery than that of Freedom: accordingly its inhabitants are quitting it.

Since the general peace, fifty thousand Englishmen have left their country, to go and live in the land of slavery: France, at present, is full of English subjects and English money.

The remittances to that foreign kingdom, since the definitive treaty, are said to exceed those sent to Germany for the support of the war.

Supposing that every subject of King George carried with him only a hundred pounds sterling for his excursion, there are five millions loss to Great-Britain; and, if we add the living of so many persons in that foreign kingdom, the nation must annually lose a like sum.

I find that in Europe a mutual restitution of riches is made; and the consequence of this is a continual balance of power.

It is wonderful to consider the series of second causes, by which ingenious countries restore to the supine, what their industry had deprived them of: trade and navigation bring floods of riches to England; and these very riches enable the English to go and spend them abroad.

There is always some defect or other in the wisest European governments: the best constituted among  
them

them have their weak side. Better laws than those of Great-Britain, for the increase of the public opulence, cannot be ; but it has not one for keeping its money at home ; which frustrates any good effect of the former.

The taxes and duties on the natural necessities of life are so overstrained in England, that the people remove to other countries, which offer the comfortable subsistence not to be had at home. A man's real country is where he can live best. The English are flocking to become subjects to the king of France ; for that king who feeds best is the real king. Men have a multitude of necessities to be answered ; and the best policy is to afford them the means of this indispensable satisfaction. What signify the vast revenues of a state ; and the subjects, in the mean time, starving ? I will only mention one particular.

Every tun of French wine pays above sixty pounds sterling duty to the government. This tax the English evade by passing over into France, where Lewis allows them to drink their fill, without any tax at all.

## LETTER XLVII.

*The Same, to the Same, at Pekin.*

London.

A Few days ago I was shewn a subject of King George's, so rich that he could purchase half England. From being only a clerk to the English East-India company, he is come to be richer than the very company itself : it is not at all strange, that a servant should mind his own interest more than that of his master.

He so artfully interposed in the differences between the savage monarchs, that he deprived one of his sceptre, and gave it to another, on condition of paying him a large tribute. After thus making a sale of crowns, to which he had no manner of right, he returned hither to enjoy an opulence which did not belong to him.

But no riches are a defence against vexations ; and this king-maker lately met with a most sensible mortification : having directed monarchs in the Indies, he was for directing a company of merchants at London ; but they excluded him.

It is even reported, that these merchants, the very same who formerly employed him in their affairs, intend to call him to account about his own.

His riches, the immensity of which dazzles the public eye, have given rise to several questions : as, whether an agent, sent to take care of the concerns of a mercantile society, can concern himself in any other thing than his particular commission ; or, if he does, whether the profit accruing from such intervention, does not of right belong to his constituents ? If so, the large tribute, to which the Indian prince submitted, ought to be paid to the company, and not to the agent.

### LETTER XLVIII.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Cotaoyu-se, Censor of the Empire, at Peking.*

London.

**C**OULDST thou ever have conceived that the ocean's moveables would be made a piece of furniture among any people, and that men should convert this great work of the Deity to a subject of ostentation ?

Here shells are a branch of luxury. I have been shewn several closets lined with them from the ceiling to the floor.

There are collections of insects in this city, which have cost no less than a hundred thousand ounces of silver. This vanity indeed is attributed to a generous zeal for the advancement of natural philosophy ; but it is nearer akin to ostentation than science, or these collections would not be shewn with such solemnity, and spoken of in such boastful terms.

The

The misfortune is, that they who affect those costly decorations are not always the most wealthy in the kingdom ; so far from it, that this folly is not seldom seen in persons of a very limited fortune : the children of such suffer by it, and some branches of population are hindered from shooting forth. I myself have seen a stale maid, whose father had laid out in crocodiles the money which should have married her : and I have been told of several young women who are like to be the last of their families, from their father's having begun an assortment of marine insects.

Medals, which are also classed among the sciences, are a second disease in European ostentation. The Cæsars, those disturbers of the political world, now cause revolutions in private families ; and none so much as the emperor Otho, though scarce seated on the Roman throne when tumbled from it. No medals are so much sought after as his. I know a virtuoso who would give half his fortune for an original Otho, though the metal of it might not be worth an English penny.

The objects of this vanity, the less splendid they are, the more valuable. A set of modern gold or silver medals, or gems, would scarce be looked on by connoisseurs and men of taste ; whereas two or three thousand black deformed worm-eaten medals raise transport and admiration, not without some envy against the inflated possessor ; and, if these copper antiques relate to distant countries, that enhances the value of them.

How happy is China in its ignorance of all these weaknesses ! Among the many advantages which we have over the Europeans, I account it not one of the least that we have left the universe to itself, and are strangers to all other antiquities than those of our native country.

## LETTER XLIX.

*The Mandarin Ni-ou-fan, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi  
at London.*

Lisbon.

**I**T is not long since Portugal was visited with a most dreadful phenomenon. God blew on this kingdom, and the earth opened and swallowed up Lisbon, so that at present it is only a heap of stones. The nation may be said to be encamped, and reduced by necessity to what the Tartars do by choice.

By the shocks still felt from time to time, the divine justice seems not to have withdrawn its vindictive arm.

This destitute people, however, cannot prevail upon themselves to forsake this spot of desolation: they, who have escaped death, are continually roaming about this unfortunate city, and almost seem to lament that they were not swallowed up with it.

Most of this hardened generation has already forgot the thunder-bolt, by which such numbers were smitten. The transitory impression is so far effaced, that all kinds of diversions and entertainments are carried on at Lisbon to greater excess, than before the direful earthquake.

Or, rather, all places are scenes of merriment and revelry.

The Portuguese dance the hay amidst the monuments of divine vengeance. Wretches, to brave the Omnipotent, and insult the wrath of heaven!

The government indeed sets the example of impiety, rebuilding the capital on the very spot where it was ingulphed, as it were, saying to the Lord of Nature, Here we will dwell in spite of all thy terrors.

This people, far from bending under the weight of God's power, make head against his decrees, and are  
for



for coping with Him, who at one blast can destroy all the nations of the universe.

## LETTER L.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Catao-yu-le, at Pekin.*

London.

**I**N England passions are everlasting: an Englishman is all habit; having once given himself up to a vice, he sticks by it to his grave: hence it is that some, habituated to the bottle all their life long, will fuddle themselves at their departure.

Others, who have wasted the pith of their existence in amours, dangle after women, even in their decrepitude, as if impotence inflamed their desire.

Dancing, in every other country an innocent diversion, indulged only at proper times, is here a violent passion, followed at every period of life.

Of hunting and field sports there is no end. Many a fowling-piece is not laid aside till its owner is laid in his coffin; and the frequency of melancholy accidents in these exercises is no manner of warning.

I have been shewn a gentleman who had rid himself blind at fox-hunting, yet followed the sport even after the loss of his sight.

But now we are upon the extraordinary doings of blind folks, here is a blind judge, who does more business than any one in the whole town.

Some, however, who have narrowly watched him, will say that he is not quite blind, but sees every thing very plainly, except equity. He administers justice by the touch, and accurately feels the weight of a cause; if so, he may do very well without eyes.

## LETTER LI.

*The Same, to the Same, at Pekin.*

London.

**Y**ESTERDAY the queen of England was delivered of a second prince, which was immediately celebrated by the Park guns, where I happened then to be.

Before these thundering expressions of joy were ceased, I espied the Baronet in one of the walks; and perceiving him immersed in thought, I said, on my coming up with him, You seem very pensive: may I, without rudeness, ask what were your thoughts?

I was thinking, answered he, on the inconveniencies incident to all political constitutions: not one occurs to me, which is not subject to the vicissitudes and effects of second causes.

If a government, continued he, be democratical, or popular, many are its inconveniencies: slowness in deliberations is unavoidable in numerous assemblies. Aristocracy is attended with jealousies and cabals among the great, besides the poor commonalty's having as many tyrants as there are senators. Under an absolute monarchy the grievances are without number. If the monarchy be mixed and tempered by a division of the supreme power between the sovereign and the people, even this system, which is said to be unquestionably the best, is not without its disadvantages.

A nation which chuses its kings, is endangered both by the royal family's barrenness and fecundity. Either the royal line fails, and then some foreign prince must be called to the crown; or civil wars ensue. On the other hand, a great increase of the royal family brings another inconveniency; for these august personages being supported by the nation, the birth of every prince

is a fresh charge on the public ; and the English are in a fair way of being in this case.

George II. left behind him nine princes, or princesses, of the royal blood : his grandson has since married, and within the space of two years been blessed with two heirs to the crown : in twenty years, by God's blessing, his Majesty may have twenty ; and then we should have no less than twenty-nine Royal Highnesses, who would be a weight on the nation, for want of disposing of them.

Some German sovereigns might take half a dozen princesses from off our hands : but how to settle our princes is the great rub ; for with their high birth they have but a small fortune, considered as princes. Every body knows that royal persons without means are poorer than others, their wants being greater, and with less ability to answer them.

Thus they will ever remain at home, and of course be an expence to the public ; for, should we be blessed with the above-mentioned glorious groupe of princesses, for which God be for ever praised, it will require no less than a million sterling to maintain them with any tolerable dignity ; a charge heavier than that of the king's household ; so that with only one king we shall be at the expence of two.

I might here, continued he, add some reflections on the number of hands which all those petty courts will take from trade, to idle away life in ante-chambers, without any other business than to dress or undress their Royal Highnesses : which is so much lost to the national manufactures.

And this is not all ; so many princes of the blood royal may be said to multiply royalty ; another no small inconveniency.

By the nature of our government the king should scarce be seen, and this multiplicity of princes shews him every where. There is no stirring out without meeting some effigy of the sovereign. If those are not original kings, they are royal copies ; and so many copies of a sovereign seem to multiply the original.

With all our boast of a free constitution, of laws superior to the prerogative, a republic, with a monarch and twenty petty kings, is a monarchical government, and even more than monarchical.

### LETTER LII.

*The Mandarin Ni-ou-fan, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, at London.*

Lisbon.

A Few days ago three natives of Portugal were burned here, for not believing that God was put to death between two robbers as a malefactor. They alledged reasons for their thinking that the Supreme Being had not debased himself to such a degree; but the inquisition caused them to be delivered up to the flames, without making known to them its reasons for believing otherwise.

This barbarity is exhibited annually with great magnificence: it is the most solemn act of cruelty I ever saw; and I believe injustice and inhumanity never dared, in any part of the universe, to assume such an appearance of loftiness and arrogance.

The day appointed for burning his Most Faithful Majesty's subjects is ushered in with every mark of exultation. It is the greatest holiday in the kingdom: on the eve of this solemnity the bells of all the churches in the kingdom are set a ringing, that the people may hasten to Lisbon, and join in the universal gladness. Indeed nothing in the world can be more showy than this spectacle of death. The entertainment opens in the morning with a procession, at the head of which march the bonzes of the inquisition, attended by the king's guards; and in the centre walk the poor victims.

The persons, who are to do the honours of the *auto da fe*, for so this tragedy is called, are habited each according to his part. They who are to be burnt are dressed up in a very grotesque manner. There is like-  
wise

wife something very droll in the garb of those who are condemned only to be scourged, or to the galleys.

The kind of crime, for which the several delinquents are punished, is indicated by some particular in their habiliment. In this procession are seen wizards and witches, who scud through the air, and every Saturday constantly repair to their nocturnal meetings.

Magicians who can alter the course of nature, and have authority over hell itself.

Inchanters, who make both themselves and others invisible.

Heretics, who believe the pope to be a man, and Christ's mother a woman.

Bad Christians, who worship no images.

Hardened sinners, who do not confess at Easter, consequently do not join in the public annual sacrifice.

Infidels, who do not believe incredible things, following the light of their own reason, preferably to the blindness of that of others.

Refractory despisers of the church's injunctions, eating flesh on Fridays and Saturdays.

Free masons, charged with the abominable guilt of meeting at a lodge twice a week, to drink together.

Jews, so execrably impious, as to refuse to eat swine's flesh, and to work on Saturdays, &c. &c.

The universal rendezvous for the procession is at a pagoda, called St. Dominick, where the warrants for sending criminals to the galleys, and the pitched shirts, are got in readiness: this is the least entertaining part of the whole exhibition. The pagoda is hung with black, as if in mourning for the murders which are going to be committed. After some devotional act at this pagoda, the procession continues its march to the stakes, which are to close the festival. The bailiffs and their followers, who, in other cases, lead malefactors to the place of execution, are, at an *au-*

*au-*



*da fe*, represented by the first personages in the kingdom. The Portuguese nobility, otherwise so stiff and haughty, on this occasion lay down their pride and arrogance, and take up an office which stamps infamy on the very dregs of the populace.

I cannot precisely tell thee, whether the holy office's executioner be a *Fidalgo*, or nobleman: however, if he be not, he might be; for, in Europe, the halter makes all the difference between those who lead criminals to the gallows, and those who hang them.

The king walks in the procession like others, and from a gallery sees eight or ten of his subjects cruelly put to death, without one thought of ever asking the reason of it.

### LETTER LIII.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kie-tou-na, at Pekin.*

London.

**H**ERE is a female animal, of which we have no manner of idea in China: it is called a coquette, but not very easily to be defined. What a coquette is not, any one can tell; but to say precisely what it is, would nonplus many a wit.

Her mind is ever in agitation, and her body in a perpetual motion, ever gadding, stopping every where, and settling no where. Some naturalists will have a coquette's heart to be like a labyrinth: others compare it to a piece of wax, susceptible of all kinds of forms, and easily changed from one to another: but, of whatever matter it be made, all agree that it is extremely light; which favours a conjecture, that a great part of it is hollow. They, who have anatomised it, say, that it has no manner of connection with the brain, and the operations of one are totally independent of the other. However, she is not insensible, being continually and solicitously taken up with a predominant passion, which is, to make all men fall in  
love

love with her, and to keep herself in an unalterable indifference to them.

It would require a whole volume to lay before thee her different devices for kindling love in those whom she intends not to love: airs, affectations, and ornaments; variations of colours in dress, yellow, white, bloom, pompadour, violet, pink, &c. &c. frequenting assemblies, the public walks, balls, the several playhouses; perpetually inticing, without being herself in the least inticed; this is her game all the year round; and the ridiculous creature continues it when quite out of season; coquetry being here an incurable disease: the London coquettes will be practising on man till their last gasp. I have read over the history of England, purely to find the origin of this character; which was quite unknown in William the conqueror's time: I find it to come from France, being brought over in the reign of the amorous Charles II. who sold Dunkirk to the French to buy ribbons: but, to the glory of the British ladies be it said, they have made such delicate improvements in the art, that they would teach the very French themselves.

#### LETTER LIV.

*The Same, to the Same, at Pekin.*

London.

**T**HE harmony, which has subsisted between the crowns of France and England ever since the peace, seems on the turn.

The French minister is not looked on so well as he used to be; not that there has been any breach of the treaty, every article of it being literally observed; but France aims at becoming powerful by sea, and is very busy in forming a navy. Now this, at once, quashes all negotiations: forty ships of the line more, and then for a war.

The declaration of it will be thus: the English will seize the French ships, and spare none they meet with  
in

in the two seas, but bring them to their own ports, or wherever they can. These hostilities will go on till suspended by a new treaty of peace; then, on the subsequent formation of a French navy, out they break again, world without end.

I do not in the least wonder at England's having laid down such a plan of successive ruptures: what amuses me is, that the French plenipotentiaries, sent to London on pacific negotiations, should apply themselves, with such heat and earnestness, to a work soon demolished by the waves of the ocean, and dashed to pieces by some pieces of timber.

### LETTER LV.

*The Mandarin Ni-ou-san, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, at London.*

Lisbon.

**T**HE European monarchs are no safer on the throne than those of Asia: this may be a consequence of absolute despotism, like causes producing like effects. However it be, the grandes of this kingdom lately formed a plot to take off their king.

On striking the blow, the assassins, being the chief men of the country, might have got the sovereignty into their own hands; for, in the first moments after an unexpected action, to attempt is to obtain; an enterprising spirit carries all before it.

The impunity of the crime depended on its accomplishment; for when once the king was dead, no human prosecutions could take place, the door of justice was shut. Happily for Portugal, the scheme was imprudent to the highest degree, even women being associated in it: and what could then be expected, but a discovery?

It appeared however morally impossible for the king to escape the fatal blow. The Portuguese monarchs have such a confidence in their subjects, as to go abroad without guards; and it was known that his  
majesty

majesty constantly returned from a favourite seat of his, about midnight, in a post-chaise, and with only a footman. The conspirators had taken post, at some distance from each other, along the avenues to the palace.

A duke, steward to the royal household, yet the head and author of the plot, fired the first shot. The king, feeling himself wounded in the arm, instead of going on, hastily turned back, and thus baulked all the other assassins.

The cause of this attempt has never been precisely known. The deficiency of the conspirators, in that prudence and sagacity which the conduct of an affair of such a nature requires, will not allow of its being imputed to ambition: the general opinion is, that they were prompted to it by some private grudge, and a jealousy at the king's visiting a lady of their family.

It appears, from the history of Spain and Portugal, that the greatest calamities, which ever have befallen those two monarchies, arose from a like cause. Count Julian, stimulated by revenge, on account of the injury done to his daughter, went over into Africa; there he encouraged the Moors to invade Spain, which they subdued, and reigned in these two kingdoms for above the space of eight hundred years.

## LETTER LVI.

*The Same, to the Same, at Pekin.*

Lisbon.

**T**HERE is a circumstance in the late Portuguese conspiracy, well worthy of notice. As the government could not well proceed on the intended assassination of the king in his capital, and by his own subjects, without bringing an indelible blot on the nation, they went a bye-way to work. It was demonstrated, in a diffuse memorial, that the late horrid attempt was originally planned by a society of bonzes, who,

who, after corrupting the commonalty by dangerous tenets, had instigated the great to murder the king.

This accusation was the more readily made use of, and met with a better reception ; the ambition of that set of men being offensive to a personage in a very high station, who managed all the indictments.

Several of these bonzes were taken up, and put under confinement.

Europe daily expected to hear of their being brought to condign punishment ; but, though a court had been instituted for trying them, no judges could be found to condemn them.

There was a necessity, however, of making at least one example, were it only to promote a persuasion that it was not any private revenge. The civil power having declined passing the sentence, one of the prisoners was delivered up to other bonzes, who have the direction of the inquisition : the affair could not have been put into better hands, for these would have been glad to have seen the whole society in the flames.

Indeed, the punishment of him who had been singled out, cleared the community, of which he was a member ; since he was put to death for quite another crime than what he had been accused of. I cannot commend the Christian princes for allowing of societies of persons wholly idle : they are not to be tolerated, were it only for the hurt they do to population and trade ; and, amidst so many just complaints against them, the arraigning them of crimes, which, from their very condition, they could not have committed, seems to me but a mean artifice.



## LETTER LVII.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kie-tou-na, at Pekin.*

London.

**T**HE supposed author of the North-Briton \* has been brought to a trial, and is to be expelled the parliament, of which he was a member: the house would not suffer among them a person of such depraved principles, as to dare to speak freely of the king's person.

The paper itself, in which the author makes the North-Briton talk of the present administration like a downright republican, has been declared a libel.

Times are altered in this kingdom: there was a period, † when the very reasons lately made use of in parliament, for declaring this paper a libel, would themselves have been reckoned a libel.

## LETTER LVIII.

*The Same, to the Same, at Pekin.*

London.

**I** Was lately, for the second time, at the Italian opera in the Hay-market: having made some observations on this spectacle, I waited on my Baronet the next morning, to talk to him upon the subject.

How is it, Sir, that both the music and language at that theatre are foreign? I had always conceived, that, for any public diversion to take with a nation, it must be in the vernacular tongue, and adapted to the general taste. " Really, answered he, that is  
" more

\* A periodical paper already mentioned.

† Under Cromwell and James II.

“ more than I can well account for. I could easier  
 “ tell you why there are Quakers in England, than  
 “ why there is an Italian theatre at London ; for, as  
 “ you have very well observed, the most trivial amuse-  
 “ ments depend on the national taste ; and the English  
 “ never were a singing nation. In almost every age,  
 “ since the foundation of the monarchy, it has wholly  
 “ been taken up with the care of its freedom and  
 “ grandeur : what old ballads have reached these  
 “ times, turn on our wars and labours, without any  
 “ mention of softness and pleasures. It is very seldom  
 “ that nations, with great concerns on their hands,  
 “ and famous for enterprise, ever minded frivolous  
 “ callings. The Romans, in the republican times,  
 “ do not appear to have been great musicians. The  
 “ idle and voluptuous countries, and where useless  
 “ arts hold the place of necessary professions, have  
 “ been the chief nursing fathers of music.

“ A queen of Scotland, indeed, about two hun-  
 “ dred years ago, had an Italian band of music, with  
 “ vocal performers ; but the taste of a female sove-  
 “ reign does not always give the turn to that of the  
 “ people.

“ I believe, the introduction of music among us  
 “ to have been pretty nearly as follows : England  
 “ being grown rich by trade and navigation, its gentry  
 “ began to visit several parts of Europe and particularly  
 “ Italy, where they met with a music which pleased  
 “ them without much understanding it ; for it is  
 “ pretty much the English way to praise what they  
 “ do not comprehend.

“ Fashion, perhaps, might likewise have some  
 “ share in its progress : for, when a nation is grown  
 “ rich, it comes to have new fancies and likings ;  
 “ hence musicians were sent for from Italy, as wine  
 “ from France, and lace from Brussels. These song-  
 “ sters ought to be perfectly enchanting, for they are  
 “ extremely chargeable : however, the English do not  
 “ appear to have any premeditated design in opening  
 “ this theatre. The expression, the sentiment, the  
 “ plot of these dramatic pieces, have nothing com-

“ mon

“ mon with our nation. It is not our vices, nor our  
 “ virtues, which are exhibited there : its morality  
 “ has no manner of relation to our ways and  
 “ manners.

“ This kind of music is fit only to entertain the  
 “ southern people of Europe, where luxury, idleness,  
 “ and vice itself, are interwoven with the political  
 “ and æconomical system of the government : and as  
 “ for some German courts having Italian bands of  
 “ music, it is well known, that the northern princes  
 “ have always had monkeys and fools about them.

“ Other dramas may possibly amend some faults in  
 “ society, and bring the motions of certain passions  
 “ into order : but an Italian opera can produce none  
 “ of these effects : virtue is not its province ; if  
 “ it pleases the senses, its intent is answered.

“ The poet's design may be good, but the music-  
 “ master does not concern himself about any such  
 “ thing ; and usually it is on him that the success  
 “ wholly depends ; for in an Italian opera the poet is  
 “ always the most insignificant person.

“ The composer's chief aim is to irritate desire :  
 “ he knows nothing beyond the emotion of the senses ;  
 “ instead of regulating the passions, his master-piece  
 “ is to stimulate them. One might say at an Italian  
 “ opera, what is commonly said at the rout of an  
 “ army, *Every one take care of himself.*

“ Metastasio, their great modern author, has  
 “ increased the poison, by enabling the composers  
 “ to place languishing notes over soft expressions.

“ The Hay-market heroes express themselves in  
 “ *lingua Toscana* ; an idiom, dead even to the very  
 “ Italians, but dead and buried to us English. Of a  
 “ thousand spectators, there are not ten who under-  
 “ stand a word of it. Take away from that brilliant  
 “ assembly those who go there to gaze about, and  
 “ others who go there to be gazed at, and let none  
 “ stay, but such as understand the play, the audience  
 “ would be reduced to twenty or thirty.

“ The director, indeed, has provided an English  
 “ translation of the opera, sold at the door : but who  
 “ can

“ can ever come to understand a foreign language,  
 “ by reading it in his own ? The idiom is ever spoiled.  
 “ I have observed, that words beginning or ending  
 “ with a vowel in the original, the book makes to  
 “ begin and end with a consonant. Herein the pit  
 “ is so often missed, that I have seen some of our  
 “ lords, at the words *ricordate mio bene*, give a clap,  
 “ thinking they contain a sentiment, whilst they are  
 “ no more than an advice : but, though this music  
 “ does not concern itself with our manners, it does  
 “ with our money, and that with a witness ! One  
 “ Italian *castrato*, among others, receives fifteen  
 “ hundred pounds sterling, only for singing thirty  
 “ times on our Haymarket stage ; which is fifty  
 “ pounds each representation : a greater sum than  
 “ our glorious Granby had for the representation of  
 “ every battle, where he exposed his life for the ho-  
 “ nour of the nation.

“ The known fondness of the English for this kind  
 “ of music, has proved a golden mine to the Italians :  
 “ they have ever since been coming to fetch gold,  
 “ but bring over only sounds. The Farinellis, the  
 “ Monticellis, the Casarellis, the Egiptiellis, the  
 “ Reggianellis, and a thousand other *ellis*, flocked  
 “ over to enrich themselves, and returned home to  
 “ enjoy their fortune, or rather ours. Other arts are  
 “ a benefit to England ; but this impoverishes us ;  
 “ instead of promoting a circulation of cash, it drains  
 “ the kingdom of its specie. Italy constantly keeps  
 “ an eye on the taste in Europe, and that it may reap  
 “ the benefit of other people’s follies, it has musical  
 “ seminaries\* ; out of which came those famous  
 “ *virtuosi*, who lay all the courts of Europe under  
 “ contribution : a piece of policy, of as good account  
 “ to the Italians as a considerable branch of trade.  
 “ By a calculation I made of the general expence of  
 “ the opera, since its institution, it has already cost  
 “ us five hundred thousand pounds, which is so much  
 “ loss to the national circulation ; and as this makes  
 “ a void

\* The Conservatori at Naples.

“ a void in the arts, trade and navigation, it follows,  
“ for the consequence is self-evident, that the Italian  
“ music has proportionally diminished our strength :  
“ and hence we may infer, for here likewise the  
“ thing speaks of itself, that, if this Italian theatre  
“ be not shut up, its *ariettas* will, in less than half a  
“ century, teach the French, those natural enemies  
“ of ours, to sing *Te Deum*. It is a clear case ;  
“ for why have we such good soldiers ? only because  
“ we pay them well : now, when our finances come  
“ to be cramped, we shall not be able to give them  
“ that encouragement.

“ It has always been a matter of surprise to me,  
“ that our p——t, amidst so many insignificant  
“ bills, should never think of making one on this  
“ important article, and our long-winded speakers  
“ never bestow a word on this growing evil.

“ Indeed, were this theatre to be shut up, our  
“ ladies of quality, and our beaux, would be strange-  
“ ly at a loss one day in the week : on Saturdays,  
“ the great opera day, they would not know what  
“ to do with themselves. It is the fashion to go  
“ thither, though at the expence of four long wear-  
“ some hours ; that is, you know, during the per-  
“ formance.

The time, however, is not quite lost there, it be-  
“ ing in some measure a public rendezvous, where  
“ many resort for quite other purposes, than hearing  
“ the music.

“ For my part, I am so averse to these Italian  
“ shows, that nothing makes me esteem his Majesty,  
“ as a patriot King, more than his contempt of these  
“ spectacles. Before his marriage he had never been  
“ at an opera so much as once ; and if ever he has  
“ honoured it with his presence, it has been purely  
“ to please the Queen his comfort : and in reality a  
“ theatre, which, besides having no moral tendency,  
“ impoverishes the state, should not be countenanced  
“ by a sovereign, who has the welfare of his people  
“ at heart.”



## LETTER LIX.

*The Same, to the Same, at Pekin.*

London.

**A**LL the Baronet had said about music, and the impropriety of Italian operas, did not satisfy me: I found I had some other questions to lay before him; so, going to drink tea with him the next morning, I entered on my interrogatories: Pray, Sir, is singing a new thing in Europe? I have heard it talked of as a modern taste: was it not known among your ancestors?

“ Yes, answered he, and perhaps their manner  
“ was more just than the present, having less of art  
“ in it. Men, continued he, had begun to sing,  
“ before there was any such thing as notes. All the  
“ languages in the world were musical originally.  
“ Articulation implies sounds, and these sounds con-  
“ stituted the vocal music of all nations.

“ The intreaties of one sex to the other formed  
“ the B. flat, and semitone; from earnestness, and  
“ the vehemence of passions, proceeded the *diefis*,  
“ the B. sharp, with all the other sharps.

“ People, in their natural speech, sung their  
“ affections and aversions; but this music, by which  
“ every nation was distinguished, was not less diffe-  
“ rent than their idioms. It may properly enough be  
“ said, that operas were before theatres. The reci-  
“ tative, still used on the stage, was the natural  
“ manner of utterance in the common occurrences  
“ of life, and the tunes expressed the effusions of the  
“ passions.

“ The masters of this art, who were not known  
“ till long after, created nothing: all they did, was  
“ only inventing notes, as marks of sounds, laying  
“ down rules for music, and reducing it to measure:  
“ in short, modern music is nothing more than vocal  
“ expression, modified into song. This song, to pro-  
“ duce

“ duce its intended effect, must be analogous to the  
“ genius of the nation for which it is composed ; for  
“ it is only by accents, natural to the soul, that  
“ it can be moved with any degree of sensibility.

“ An Englishman, in saying that Italian music  
“ moves him, does not mean that it affects him ;  
“ moving and affecting being very different. Thun-  
“ der, or great guns, causes an emotion in all men,  
“ but does not equally affect them.

“ For the emotion caused by music to produce a  
“ like sensation in people of two different countries,  
“ the two languages must render like expressions by  
“ like sounds.

“ Between the English grammatical accent and the  
“ modulation of the Italian music there is no kind of  
“ affinity : the English accentuation does not make  
“ the like impression on an Italian brain. The diffe-  
“ rence of the vocal expression shews itself in the dra-  
“ ma of the two nations : Garrick does not act King  
“ Richard III. as would an Italian player ; nor does  
“ Woodward, in the comic stile, express his part  
“ like Sachi, the famous Italian comedian : the tones  
“ and accents are quite different ; and, were these  
“ actors reciprocally to change their theatrical ca-  
“ dence, they would not be understood by their re-  
“ spective nations. Mademoiselle Claison, whose  
“ pathetic modulations, in tragedy, throw the Pari-  
“ sians into tears, would set the London audiences a  
“ yawning.

“ I allow that one music may be superior to ano-  
“ ther ; but this superiority relates only to the har-  
“ mony of sounds, which is nothing but a more  
“ perfect combination of notes. Then the expression  
“ may suffer by this superiority, as, in some nations,  
“ the more harmonious an accent, the less expressive.  
“ And we are not to imagine that there is a general  
“ expression in music, which will rouse the passions  
“ in all nations : this requires, that all men should  
“ have the same degree of sensibility.

“ These sounds, indeed, may be so combined, as  
“ to express the accents of every particular nation ;  
“ but

“ but this is a perfection beyond the attainment of  
 “ modern music. In order to this, the masters should  
 “ have a general idea of the morals and manners of  
 “ nations ; should be acquainted with their religions,  
 “ politics, customs, taste, genius, and particularly  
 “ their climate and constitution ; for all these concur  
 “ in giving each nation its degree of sensibility : now  
 “ such a happy revolution in this art is not to be ex-  
 “ pected, the most skilful music-masters being men of  
 “ shallow parts, and without any other knowledge  
 “ than the placing of notes on lines.

“ A moral impossibility may likewise obstruct this  
 “ perfection, the musical taste and genius of an Italian  
 “ composer being derived from the climate : and, for  
 “ his temperament, he cannot give it a new turn ; he  
 “ composes by his own sensations, and not by those  
 “ of others.

“ The expression, properly so called, on which  
 “ the Italian music is grounded, differs in every re-  
 “ spect from that of the English : the force of that  
 “ language is incompatible with the modesty of ours.  
 “ A Briton, who, in common conversation, should  
 “ express himself in this manner, *Oh cara, carissima,*  
 “ *diletta del mio cuore, anima dell' anima mia !* with  
 “ other phrases, very common in Italy, would be  
 “ stared at here.”

You are, said I, interrupting him, speaking only  
 of the impropriety of the mode, as I may say ; but I  
 would know whether the moderns have improved  
 music in general. “ That is what I can't well tell  
 “ you,” answered he ; “ a great many hold the affir-  
 “ mative ; but, for my part, I am so far of a diffe-  
 “ rent opinion, that I rather think they have spoiled  
 “ it : I'll give you a sketch of its history.

“ Some thousand years ago, the singing of the Euro-  
 “ peans was no more than their natural pronunciation ;  
 “ but the Italians, in process of time, substituted art  
 “ in the room of nature, and turned singing into  
 “ thrilling. After spoiling their own music, they  
 “ spoilt that of other nations.

“ The

“ The Italian music was originally only a recitative, as it is still subsists in the operas; that is, a simple utterance, expressive of the accents of the soul. Voice was made use of to sooth or inflame the heart, and not to tickle the ears: it scarce differed from vocal expression: the notes were as grave as the words, till the *semicromas* and *ariettas* made their appearance, to the total subversion of the original system.

“ *Faustina* was the first who exceeded six notes in a measure. *Bernard* had before exerted himself to the utmost celerity of expression, and *Farinelli*, who came after him, reduced the whole to whistling. The Italian stage became the land of nightingales, and capacity consisted in a good windpipe: he who could quaver through two or three octaves, or sing a *sonata* to a fiddle, bore the bell. The natural expression of the antient song was now absorbed by art: he who outstripped the notes, if I may be allowed the expression, was a tip-top singer. The fiddles could not keep pace with the voices: the *ariettas* were raised to a louder key.

“ Sharp and forced notes became necessary, that they might be heard above a numerous orchestra; and this signing being unnatural, nature was, in a monstrous manner, adapted to it. Men were castrated like horses: the world, with amazement and detestation, saw a generation of mortals, who were neither male nor female. This mutilation, before known only in eastern palaces, became a customary practice for the stage.

“ The *buon gusto* put the finishing hand to adulterations; and in what it consisted was never known, except its being a new mode of singing, perpetually varying: it never continued the same ten years together; and amidst its many variations, it not unfrequently contradicted itself; for *Il buon gusto*, at one time, was *Il cattivo gusto* of another.

“ The Spaniards, and the Portuguese, being of a very impressible temperament, readily adapted this voluptuous music. The Moors, their conquerors, Vol. VI. M “ had

“ had introduced the African music among them ; and  
“ it was made use of for the space of eight hundred  
“ years : soon after the expulsion of that people, the  
“ climate was on restoring the original Spanish music,  
“ when they became enamoured with that of Italy.  
“ The Germans likewise, from a like infatuation, in-  
“ corporated this new Italian mode with theirs ; and  
“ the result of this medley was a kind of harmony, as  
“ strange and uncouth, as it was singular.

“ Handel, though looked upon as the restorer of  
“ our music, I rather think, spoiled it : the dose of Ita-  
“ lian, which he infused into it, was too strong : yet  
“ has his method being religiously observed by all suc-  
“ ceeding composers. Our present British tunes are  
“ made up of thrills and quavers. Handel has ejected  
“ true ingenious song, and, in its stead, given us a  
“ false and deceptive manner. An Englishman, when  
“ he sings now, does not speak truth ; he is so far Ita-  
“ lianized, that, in musical expression, he studies ra-  
“ ther to impose on the senses, than captivate the  
“ heart.

“ This is, as if a nation was to change its idiom,  
“ and, after speaking one and the same language for  
“ twenty centuries, be obliged to make use of ano-  
“ ther.

“ Let it not be thought a matter of indifference,  
“ that a people is affected by one mode sooner than  
“ by another ; for history informs us, that no alter-  
“ ations were ever made in music, but they more or  
“ less affected the government : and good reason why ;  
“ for music, by acting on the senses, influences the  
“ manners. From this I could draw an inference,  
“ and perhaps even prove, that since the Italian mu-  
“ sic's getting footing in England, luxury and voluptu-  
“ ousness have increased among us.”



## LETTER LX.

*The Mandarin Ni-ou-fan, to the Mandarin Cha n-pi-pi,  
at Peking.*

Lisbon.

I Lately took a dinner with an English merchant, who had invited me. Having heard that the British merchants at London lived thriftily, I expected a dinner answerable to that character; but, behold, here was an entertainment splendid to profusion and magnificence.

Dinner being over, the guests were led into a second apartment, where footmen, in rich liveries, brought coffee in gold cups.

After drinking coffee, a game at cards was proposed, and my friend asked me to make one. I excused myself, as knowing nothing of European games; on which he answered, Don't be afraid, Sir, that here you may be drawn in to lose any great matter; we only play for diversion: he must have ill luck indeed, who in a whole afternoon, should lose fifty moidores; that is, near three hundred ounces of solid silver. Had I known the game ever so well, such a diversion would have set me against it. Accordingly I was left to myself, and the other guests, placing themselves round tables, began to play. Two or three hours did I walk about to see their manner of playing; and the up-shot was, that some of the merchants lost two or three hundred moidores for this afternoon's diversion.

The cards being thrown aside, the master of the house ordered his horses to be put to, and a very magnificent equipage carried us to the Long Room. This is an assembly, set up by the English factory, where, every day in the year, they laugh, eat and drink, dance, and game, from six in the evening till midnight.

That day there happened to be an extraordinary ball. On entering the saloon, believe me, I was struck with

the view : never did my eyes behold such luxury and magnificence: any one would have taken these merchants for petty sovereigns, and their wives looked like so many vice-queens. After dancing, or rather romping for about two hours, the company removed into another apartment, where were two hundred covers: immediately a supper was served up, which would have done honour to the magnificence of the greatest monarchs in Europe. The ladies only sat down, the gentlemen standing behind their chairs to wait on them. After supper the ladies rose, and left the table to the gentlemen, who sat down, and a fresh supper was brought in.

Whilst the gentlemen were at table, I went back into the ball-room, and seated myself by an English gentleman in a plain dress, and lately come from London. Perceiving by his countenance, that all this parade did not much please him; Sir, said I, will you be so good as to explain this riddle to me? This is an assembly of merchants, whose principal qualities are, or should be, economy and frugality; and yet what profuseness and magnificence is here! What divinity is it then which presides in this place? Folly, answered he, and all the people you see here are its worshippers. The misfortune is, continued he, that Great Britain is a loser by this luxury; for these extravagant expences being among the Portuguese, they thus recover the money which our labour and industry had got from them: the manufactures of our workmen are here dissipated in feasts and entertainments. At this very time a scheme is talked of for a masquerade, which will cost the factors, or rather England, above a thousand guineas.

Pray, what kind of merchants are these? They are, answered he, what we call factors: goods are consigned them from England, and they dispose of them on account of the English merchants. Well, and do they give a good account of their commissions? said I. A very good account; for, that there may be no mistake in the articles, they give no account at all. Effects  
sent

sent from London to Lisbon may be looked on, as in mortmain, utterly lost. It is now six months since I left England to settle with my correspondent, who, to-night, is master of the ceremonies here, and finer dressed than ever I saw King George himself; yet cannot I bring him to come to an account with me: nay, he threatens, if I talk much, to bring our affairs before a Portuguese court: should it be so, my account is indeed settled; and I may go back as I came; for a law-suit, at Lisbon, takes up exactly a century.

In the mean time the ladies and gentlemen were returned into the dancing-room; on which we withdrew to a corner, where we had a full sight of the company, ourselves scarce seen. Sir, said I, you must, to be sure, have some knowledge of this assembly: will you be so good as to make me less a stranger to it? I know several, said he; but, before speaking particularly of them, I must give you a general sketch of the whole body, as thereby the sequel will be more perspicuous and entertaining. All whom you see are exotics, transplanted hither by accident or indigence; but how different their present affluence from their original poverty!

About six years ago, their luxury had brought them so low, that the whole factory must unavoidably have broke, had not the Divine wrath saved them: the earthquake strengthened several houses, which were near falling; and the general conflagration of Lisbon performed a very unexpected miracle on many English magazines, consuming effects which were not there: it may be compared to the Greek fire, which destroyed at a distance. Observe that man facing us; he is a Hamburg merchant: things were but so-so with him the day before the earthquake, and the day after he became very rich, realising effects, to the amount of fifty thousand pounds sterling, which belonged to his correspondents. This may be said to rise out of the ashes of roguery.

You see that little man, with such brisk eyes: he was perplexed about ballancing, when that phæno-

menon burned his books. The earthquake was a lucky event to him : the same day eased him of his wife, and revived his credit. But, said I, interrupting him, give me leave to ask who are those gentlemen with a broad red ribbon, whom I see in different parts of the room, and to whom great respect is shewn? These are *señalgos*, or *grandees* of the kingdom. What business have they here? They seem to me quite out of their element. Why, I will tell you; they come to affect, in public, a great regard for the English, and afterwards, among themselves, laugh at our folly.

Yonder merchant, that handsome man, standing at the farther end of the room; I beg a word or two about him. Trade must think itself honoured in such a member; but, far from being a merchant, he is ambassador from the first crown in Europe. He is very young, said I, for a depository of court-secrets. A marriage, said my companion, gave him a lift into the ministry. He has married a widow, whose husband is still living. His sudden promotion was the table-talk over all Europe: but where is the mighty matter? Something must be done for those magnanimous persons who have overcome vulgar prejudices.

He, next to him, I take to be, likewise, some public minister. You are right; he is a minister; and from a counting-house has stepped into an embassy: but that's nothing uncommon in the republic where he was born. He is reckoned a man of wit; but I could wish him a little more sense. The low circumstances of his family required a good match, and he has gone and made a bad one. The government, which employs him, has supplied that deficiency; but I have no great liking to those who burthen the state, in repairing their follies. Who is that large man, of pretty good presence, but something singular in his dress? That, replied he, is a Dutch merchant, and the king of P——'s resident; who, without ever seeing, or knowing him, made him his minister; but, at the same time, by way of a cautionary warrant against his conceitedness, gave him in charge, not to concern himself  
about

about what affairs he may have at this court. Princes, like skilful artificers, give a value to the meanest material. I fancy there are several other ministers with those you were speaking of. No, answered he, those are consuls. And pray, said I, what may that mean? They are state-lackies, or political apprentices. It seems, said I, too late in the day with most of them to be apprentices: is it not some time before they learn to be consuls? No, answered he, they are so at the very first.

Here I begged a few minutes more of the communicative gentleman, with a promise of dropping my impertinence. What are all these female deities, dressed up like princesses, yet with something so ordinary and low in their looks, as if they were chamber-maids disguised in their mistresses clothes? There is not one woman, said he, among all this flaunting groupe, who is not, in fact, disguised; not one, whose condition does not bely her dress: most of them are beggars brats, sprung from the dirt, and of course haughty and silly: they are eaten up with vanity. In other countries, pride makes women insupportable; at Lisbon, it makes them mad: the distemper affects the fibres of the brain; and then the husbands send them to Ireland for the recovery of their senses. Yet I cannot say it is the peculiar fault of the creatures; pride and impertinence are natural to females of mean birth, and consequently of no education: it is the husbands who are to blame, ruining themselves for the whims of such consorts.

But to return to the factory: the fire of Lisbon had pretty well retrieved their affairs; but a new profuseness, a dissipation before quite unheard of, has plunged them into all the difficulties they laboured under, at the time of that phenomenon: it is however hoped, that, by God's blessing, a second earthquake will soon set all to rights again.



## LETTER LXI.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kie-tou-na,  
at Pekin.*

London.

**I**Went, yesterday, to the grand ridotto; a public saloon, where the nobility of both sexes meet four times a year.

There was a great deal of company, and the ladies were extremely well dressed; yet many, with all their finery, made but a homely appearance. The English women do not appear cut out for dress; their various ornaments give them something of an air of constraint, which quite disfigures their natural beauty.

After looking at one another for some time, the company divided into parties, at different quarters of the room, to dance some minuets, as the Europeans phrase it.

This dance, I believe, I may have already mentioned to thee; but the affair is as follows. A gentleman takes a lady by the hand, and leads her a step or two forward with him; then makes her describe a circle backwards, by which she is brought to the place where he took her; then they cross over for four or five minutes, their eyes meeting as they pass by each other; and conclude with a low genuflexion on both sides: the whole is performed in a very grave manner, without so much as a simper or smile, minuets in Europe being, of all diversions, the most serious. Whether these ladies and gentlemen turned well, I cannot pretend to say; but a Frenchman, a native of Paris, who stood behind us, was perpetually saying, 'There's awkward dancing! no ease, no sprightliness, no air: was ever such stiffness seen! they are like moving images! And it is not unlikely that he was something of a judge; for the annals of Europe make the Parisians better dancers than the Londoners.

The

The diplomatic body, as it is called, was at this ball, but without distinguishing itself to any great advantage.

France, since the last war, has given over dancing: Spain is afraid of making a false step: the noise of great guns has brought a deafness on the queen of Hungary; and Portugal's late narrow escape has put it out of conceit with dancing: Holland stands neuter, let who will dance: Venice would dance, were it not apprehensive that the Turk would put it out of tune; and the Prussian monarch, since the introduction of his solemn military tread, has forbidden his ministers and all about him to cut any capers.

Of all the powers of Europe, whose ambassadors were present, Russia alone danced two minuets: I am no judge of his performing; but an English politician, on my left hand, whispered to me, That is not the most thining part of his ministry.

The Baronet and I, being no dancers, walked about to view the ladies; on our meeting with any remarkable face, I had my question ready, and my friend as readily answered it; but, my questions coming on very thick, he thought it best to anticipate them.

Do you see, said he, that lady sitting opposite the dancers? It is my lady —: there is a sweetness in her countenance; but with something of an insipidity that extremely disgusts men of sense. The lady with such charming features and complexion, who now speaks to her, is lady —, a dumb beauty: her charms are without expression, like those of a great many English women, who seem made to be crayoned: their faces have all the excellencies of a portrait; and of this lady it may be said, that the copy will be viewed by posterity with more pleasure, than the original is by her cotemporaries. The third, standing before her, is lady —: there are eyes! there's a mouth! observe what a lovely arm! it is a thousand pities she is too high in flesh. That fourth, who steps to speak to her, is my lady —: she has a good share of ready wit, and would not look amiss, were she

she not so excessively meagre. There is always some flaw or other in English beauties ; either they carry a consumption in their looks, or are too replete. Mind that Roman beauty there, before us : that is Mrs. P——— : there's a stately figure ! dignity and amiableness blended : but she is a little hard of hearing, so that it is pain to her own sex to converse with her ; and yet, a whisper from a man she shall hear very clearly.

We had already mustered half the ladies of the company, when I was struck by some features, which I had never seen before.

Sir, said I to the Baronet, who are those three beauties, coming towards us, arm in arm ? They are the H—r—t—ns. Heavenly creatures indeed ! continued I : that they are sisters, I see by their resemblance. Yes, but she in the middle is the eldest, the mother of the other two. A very extraordinary mother, said I, to look never the worse for being born twenty years before her daughters. I assure you, not a few would hesitate which of the three to chuse. Here on our right I observe three or four ladies in large hoops, and their dress most gorgeous ; yet with something odd in their looks : who can they be ? They are Jewesses come from the city. Why, indeed, replied I, on a closer view, those faces plainly shew the Jerusalem fabric : their 'squire, said he, with his queer eyes and wainscot face, is a Jewish fop ; of all the characters in Europe, the most ridiculous.

This, I promise you, shall conclude my questions for this evening ; only tell me who that young lady is, so glittering with diamonds, whom all the men whisper as they pass by, and she smiling at all the men ? I will tell you : she is a lady of pleasure, in quest of culls : she has raised large supplies from half the English nobility, and now is for sheeving the other half. You see she is nothing of a beauty : her face is all skin and bone : she is low-chested, her shape clumsy, her arms coarse, and with a very ugly hand : then she is the most empty creature I ever knew. I have several times spoke to her, purely to sound her sense, but always  
grew

grew sick of her: yet is she much followed, and thus is enabled to strip heirs, and other young gentlemen; for at London every thing has its run, even to prostitution itself.

Has London no hospitals for those women? said I. Hospitals! answered he: we have none for foundlings;\* then how should we have any for those who bring them forth?

## LETTER LXII.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Cotao-yu-le, at Pekin.*

London.

SINCE the conclusion of the late peace between England and France, the English women are observed to be grown more fond of trifles. The island is now deluged with heaps of fashions and ribbons, which the war kept beyond sea.

Among other frivolous imports, several dolls as big as the life, and dressed in the Paris fashions, have been brought over, as models for the British ladies.

The introduction of these gewgaws has caused a striking change in the British females; particularly, that since their being dressed out in all their foreign decorations, they are become even more talkative than before.

Whether some colours have an occult quality in relaxing the tongue, I cannot pretend to say; but it is a remark of my own, that a London girl, in a Pompadour gown, has an uncommon flow of words; and I have farther taken notice, that, after the signing of the preliminaries, the fair sex here were universally become Frenchified.

For instance; since the peace, they have docketed their hats, so as to lay bare the whole nape of their necks.

\* London has one, but the income is not sufficient.

These

These new-fashioned hats, which are flat behind, were not adapted without design : a woman now can put herself in what posture she pleases, and the husband never the wiser ; whereas, before, the rumples of the hats discovered into what attitudes wives had been throwing themselves.

The English moralists affirm, that nothing but a fifty years continual war with France will bring the English women to be like their plain thrifty grandmothers.

They have farther observed, that beating the French half a score times, effects only a transitory reformation ; for a peace brings over dolls, ribbons, pompoons, &c. and spreads all the former contagion of levity, ostentation, and profuseness.

### LETTER LXIII.

*The Mandarin Niousan, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, at Pekin.*

Lisbon.

**T**HOUGH I have nothing to ask at court, yet I am desirous of seeing a public audience of one of their men in power ; especially having heard that it was very well worth a foreigner's notice.

Accordingly I went yesterday to Count O——'s, chief minister of state. There were only sixteen hundred persons, waiting to speak with him. The passage to his closet, the chamber, ante-chamber, stairs, hall, steps, and half the street, were covered with suitors. Sir, said I to a Portuguese standing next to me, it must take the count up months to dispatch all his dependents. Months ! answered he, it is done in a trice : his excellency's horses are already put to ; he is going to the king, and he gives us audience as he comes along : thank God ! our ministers, at Lisbon, are expeditious.—Oh—the door opens ! there's his excellency ! now you will see what quick work he makes with us.

Count O—— is on the wrong side of sixty, tall, long-visaged, something blear-eyed : through the natural gravity of his countenance, it might be perceived that he



he is tolerably master of his muscles, and had been adapting them to a semblance of ease and popularity. The whole croud rushed towards him; those who were in the ante-chamber, pressed to the closet-door; they who stood in the street, thrust themselves into the hall; and those who filled the hall, forced their way up stairs: the ocean, in a storm, cannot be more tumultuous. "My lord, cries the first, here's my memorial; it is concerning——. Very well, said the minister, with an air of affability; I know its contents, and shall take care to give orders accordingly. My lord, said a second, I come about a——. O! very well, I understand you, I'll do what is necessary. May it please your excellency, interrupted a third, I would remind you of Manuel Lopes's pension. It shall be paid in time. My lord, continued a man pretty well advanced in years, it is now thirty years since I have been soliciting. T'other thirty years patience, said the minister, and your solicitations will be at an end." So far he is right, whispered the Portuguese to me; for the poor petitioner is already turned of seventy, and at an hundred years asking is over with us.

In the mean time the audience went on. "My lord, cried a man in the crowd, I am sent to your excellency by the king, to——. I know the affair: he has not said a word of it to me, but it is as well. My lord, continued another, your excellency knows what brings me here. Yes—no—oh! I have your meaning,—ay, that's the very thing."

Here a person in an uniform, with ardour in his looks and words, cried out, "I come for my colonel's commission for the new regiment of dragoons. It is made out, said the count; the regiment is appointed; we only want soldiers."

"My lord, said another, I am director of the royal damask and satin manufactures, and come to let your excellency know, that we are at a stand for want of silk. Make use of cotton."

"My

“ My lord, said another, putting a paper into his hand, I am master ship-wright of the king’s dock ; we want timber for building men of war. Let cork serve.

“ My lord, said a commissioner of the treasury, we are quite out of cash.—Then draw on the bank of England ; they have got all our money.” Amidst these expeditious dismissions, he was still making his way to the street-door, where his coach waited for him : at his appearance, the door being immediately opened, the minister threw himself in, and drove away to the king : and this was his way of dispatching his clients.

I observed that this able minister’s great art, is to cut short those unhappy people, whose affairs drive them to his levee : and, indeed, were he patiently to hear each of them tell his tale, there would be no end of it ; so that it is much the best way to mind none, and thus quickly dispatch them all.

#### LETTER LXIV.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kie-tou-na, at Pekin.*

London.

WITH this I send thee the faces of the most celebrated English beauties, which may well be called a complete set of charms, graces, and allurements. I purchased it at a shop, where they are sold single : they do not come dear ; a few guineas will buy a whole seraglio ; and, indeed, they are the cheapest things, at present, in England. I have, in my chamber, half a dozen ladies, all celebrated beauties, and their eyes stand me only in six-pence the pair.

Here a husband has no exclusive enjoyment of his wife : three or four thousand individuals come in for a share, by buying the pictures of them ; and it is said, that sometimes the enjoyment of the original is less eligible

eligible than of the copy: however, I have heard, that there are many husbands, in London, lead a most wearisome life with their angelic spouses. It is not only ladies of pleasure, that are represented in prints, but even ladies of quality are thus exposed to the public gaze.

In these face-shops you see vice on a level with virtue; for I bought the following, which were all in a string: Fanny Murray, Lady Berkeley, Kitty Fisher, Lady Fortescue, Charlotte Fisch, Lady Waldegrave, Nancy Dawson, Lady Barrington, Nelly O'Brien, the Dutchess of Ancaster.

Besides female beauties, the dealers in prints have complete sets of the great men of the senate and courts of justice; and the like honour is conferred on those of the theatre.

One of these print-sellers was talking to me of a scheme of his, to have the pictures of all the members of parliament who approved the last treaty of peace. If so, many an obscure face will make its public appearance.

## LETTER LXV.

*The Same, to the Same, at Pekin.*

London.

LETTERS from Paris say, that the king of France has recalled a disgraced minister: this is the first favourite ever known to be allowed to appear within the gate of Fortune's temple, after being once turned out: accordingly this singular event occasioned a great deal of talk here, and various are people's sentiments.

The Paris naturalists say, that the monarch's constitution is impaired, that he is not so full of animal spirits, whose vigorous action on the brain might enable him to go through with a resolution.

Politicians will have it to be a forced state-fetch, to which the king's warrant has been obliged to give way: they

they affirm, that in the present juncture, there is not another minister qualified to take the helm ; and that, if he was not recalled sooner, it was only to have time for preparing his machines, the operation of which will greatly heighten his glory.

Others again conjecture, that this is all the favourite slave's doings : after overthrowing the idol, she is for shewing France that she likewise can replace it on its pedestal. I am rather inclined to this last opinion, from the singularity of this recall, as it denotes an unlimited ascendancy over the sovereign's mind.

## LETTER LXVI.

*The Same, to the Same, at Pekin.*

London.

**T**HE son of a sovereign German prince came over to marry the king of England's sister. Being subjects of the highest rank, they were judged to be within the verge of the ceremonial of courts, relatively to royal personages, extremely rigorous, and even inhospitable ; for the prince was not allowed to make any stay in England ; by his alliance to the crown he forfeited the privilege of a subject ; he had barely time to marry the princess and make off. This illustrious pair were obliged to cross the sea, at a season no less dangerous than severe : after their departure, it was not known, for some days, what was become of them ; nay, it was reported, that they both were lost ; but such is the rule, go they must, had unavoidable death stared them in the face.

Thou seest, that for a foreign prince to come over and marry a daughter of England, is something dangerous, as running the hazard of consummating his marriage at the bottom of the sea, before he can get his bride into his own country.

LET-

## LETTER LXVII.

*The Mandarin Ni-ou-fan, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi,  
at London.*

Lisbon.

**A**S to the manner of these people, I shall say little: like some others in Europe, religion and morality have not the least weight with them.

The late remedy, which heaven made use of, for the amendment of the Portuguese, has only increased their profligacy. Before the earthquake, Lisbon had some appearance of virtue; but since that convulsion, it is totally over-run with vice. Debauchery, which religion and decency kept shut up in convents, has broke loose, and dissoluteness is become universal. They, who had devoted themselves to continency, have availed themselves of the wrath of heaven, to give a loose to their desires. Astonishing obduracy! a people to plunge themselves deeper in guilt, the more means a merciful God employs for drawing them out of perdition! But the whole is not to be charged to the late phenomenon; the way had partly been laid by superstition, luxury, pride and ostentation.

Absolute despotism may likewise have had no small share in it. A people compelled to turn their eyes aside from the proceedings of government, naturally sink into sloth, supineness, idleness, and indolence; the prelude to all manner of enormities.

L, E T-



## LETTER LXVIII.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kie-tou-na, at Pekin.*

London.

THE European monarchs always converse by letters, without ever exchanging a word together : if they see each other's pictures, that is all : they enter into treaties, declare war, or make peace, without ever seeing one another : not that, like the eastern princes, they keep themselves shut up in their palaces ; so far from it, that they are always riding about : but European dignity does not admit of a king's ever speaking to his equal ; and for one sovereign to meet another, is an ill omen to both.

Lewis XIV. king of France, on taking leave of a king of England, named James, said to that prince, *The best thing I can wish you is, that I may never see you again.*

It is not the distance of places, which occasions this strange behaviour, most of the European states being of no very great extent. There is a certain sovereign, who rides over more ground, at a stag-hunting, than would carry him to two or three neighbouring sovereigns. The greatest difficulty about visiting one another, is in the ceremonial of such an interview.

About half a century ago, an emperor of Russia took it into his head to come and pay a visit to a king of France ; which put the French court to such perplexity, that a message was sent to him, to know how he would be received.

As two suns are never seen in the same horizon, so must not two sovereigns be in the same place.

A prince seated on the throne, surrounded by his subjects, could not bear to hear the title of majesty given to any other ; it is incompatible with regal dignity : and though, in the courts of certain European monarchs,

monarchs, there may happen to be other fires, yet these are some dethroned fires, mere cyphers, living on a precarious allowance.

It is a misfortune to the Europeans, that the court-ceremonials do not allow of sovereigns meeting, and consequently of settling their affairs themselves.

Their envoys are not so nearly concerned, nor have they the like affection for the people: agents never transact business so well as principals.

I have elsewhere taken notice that the former, by their want of capacity, rather make bad worse.

I enlarge on this head, because I could heartily wish that Lewis the XVth and George the IIIrd had an interview, and that, on this occasion, two honest sensible persons would lay before them the calamities which war has brought on their people. I conclude, from the good temper and generosity of both these princes, that, for the relief and welfare of their subjects, they would soon join in a constant and inviolable peace. That ambition, which commits such ravages in Europe, and makes this part of the world a scene of devastation and horror, is not owing to kings; it is they who have their ear, that are the incendiaries.

## LETTER LXIX.

*The Same, to the Same, at Peking.*

London.

**W**E hear from France, that the parliaments of the kingdom make very strong representations to the throne, on the present bad state of the finances, and the means of retrieving them. They likewise declare against the impositions of certain taxes, peculiarly onerous to the people.

The open force hitherto made use of, to restrain them within a blind obedience, has only made them both more keen-sighted, and more resolute in the discharge of their duty.

They

They have laid their complaints before the monarch, in terms which would do honour to those antient republicans who broke the chains of despotism.

Some politicians, however, think that such a spirit of independency, now germinating in the soil of slavery, is not in its right place ; and for every thing to be in its local order, this boldness should cross the sea, and remove into the land of independency. Concerning this, a schemer lately said, that the parliament of Rouen should be sent to London, and the House of C——— come to Paris.

But I have spoken to some speculatists, who assured me that Great Britain would be never the better for such an exchange, as the energy and vehemence of the French speeches would relax at Calais ; adding further, that the eloquent parliament of Rouen, though it might reach London safely, on being welcomed by certain agents, would not have a word to say.

## LETTER LXX.

*The Same, to the Same, at Pekin.*

London.

**T**HE news mongers, and coffee-house politicians, who here settle the nation's affairs, affirm, that the former minister, who was dismissed, on the demise of George II. is coming into play again. They tell you of a conference already held for that purpose, and that the sovereign lately closeted him, to know whether a *mezzo termine* would not be expedient in the present situation of public affairs ; that is, whether he would not accept of the administration on certain conditions : but the minister stood to his point, and even required concessions which this sovereign rejected.

On this dissension the conference broke up ; the king determined to do without him, and he no less determined that he should not.

From

From the great party which the minister has in the nation, it is not improbable that the people will, as it were, give him a replevin to be reinstated in his post : should this be the case, he will foil the crown a second time ; I mean, he will have obliged two kings of England to keep him in the ministry. After all, I do not know, but the sovereign's being forced to retain, at the head of affairs, those whom he could wish at a distance, may sometimes be an advantage to a nation.

## LETTER LXXI.

*The Mandarin Ni-ou-san, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi,  
at London.*

Lisbon.

**W**ERE angels of an olive complexion, I should compare the Portuguese women to those celestial spirits, the beauties here being of a brown complexion, with a tinge of the tawny.

The women in Portugal have generally fine eyes and teeth ; two capital features, which in some measure cover any other defects in a face : accordingly, almost all the Portuguese women are reckoned pretty.

As to their wit, I shall say nothing of it. The Europeans give that name to a certain freedom and cheerfulness of behaviour, which, in a Chinese woman, would be accounted indecency. Then it is so very seldom foreigners have any conversation with Portuguese women, that what description they can give of them must be very superficial and uncertain.

The Moorish customs still prevail here : these people were in possession of the kingdom eight hundred years ; and, in all likelihood, it will be as many before the Portuguese come to be true Europeans.

Since my being at Lisbon, I have not seen so much as the shadow of a woman of quality in the day-time ; they seem to have taken a disgust at day-light. The sun, in all its course along this horizon, never  
has

has a glimpse of them ; they only make their appearance by candle-light. The women in high life here, have an ostentatious custom, not known, I believe, any where else, never visiting without a pair of blazing flambeaux before them : this parade, I suppose, may be derived from Lapland, or some other hyperborean country, of perpetual darkness. Some secret anecdotes of this monarchy say, that the female *fidalgos* are very beautiful. If I can get at the sight of any, thou shalt know farther about them.

### LETTER LXXII.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kie-tou-na, at Pekin.*

London.

SINCE I have been in England, three remarkable persons have furnished this nation with a great deal of talk ; the Cock-lane \* ghost, the queen's afs, † and Wilkes, ‡ the member of parliament. The ghost amused court and city for a long time ; multitudes of both sexes, and even some bonzes, visited it at its home, and conversed with it. Its articulation, it seems, was not over distinct ; but some sounds came from it, and this was enough for its making great noise.

The queen's afs, at its first coming over, was excessively pestered with visits : guards were appointed for it, and a centinel posted at the door ; so that, had a Dutcheß of Modena come to London, she would not have been received with greater honour. The resort of people to its escorial, near Buckingham-gate, was inconceivable.

Fame, in the mean time, was not idle, exciting the  
curiosity

\* A catch penny cheat.

† A beautiful zebra, of the asinine species, made a present of to her majesty.

‡ The writer of a periodical paper.



curiosity of the public by pompous narratives of its fine tail, the length of its ears, and the surprising beauty of its striated skin ; but its apartments not being fit to receive a large company, some genius of an engraver published a print of it, that they who could not approach its person, might be possessed of its figure ; and this contrivance turned to good account.

Wilkes still made more noise than the ass ; his confinement in the Tower gave rise to a multitude of political debates, and very profound dissertations ; and his discharge made a greater noise here, than did the public entrance of the Grand Turk at Constantinople. But, alas ! how fleeting all sublunary glory ! the ghost was pilloried, the ass quite forgotten, and Wilkes stole away over to France, to avoid the ghost's fate, or something else.

## LETTER LXXIII.

*The Same, to the Same, at Pekin.*

London.

THE peace of Europe has given rise to much debate, and the systematical men have discussed it till bewildered in their own investigations. The definitive treaty has been accounted no more than a consequence of some measures long since digested in certain courts : others again attribute it to the oversights of the combined powers of Vienna and Versailles : others again lay the cause of it in the misconduct of the generals. But, with submission, it is an idle presumption in politicians, to take the lead of providence, and anticipate events ; for, after mature consideration, chance may be said to decide the fate of nations. A musket-shot may totally change the whole state and appearance of Christendom, so as not to be known again.

Had the king of Prussia fallen in the heat of the last war, Europe would be in a very different situation to what it is.

Behold

Behold what a change in the general plan the musket-ball, which had put an end to that prince's life, would have brought about! The province, for which that monarch had begun the war, would now have been in the hands of Austria; and thus it would have recovered its former superiority.

The whole power of the Prussian monarch, being, as it were, collected in himself, his death would have enfeebled his dominions so that his several enemies would have made a division of them, and this dismemberment produced a considerable change in the balance of the north; such a change, as would soon have given a new face to this part of the world. Those nations, which submitted at the treaty of peace, would have prescribed the conditions, without any abatement.

This revolution would likewise have affected the public opinions: the king of Prussia, now admired as the most consummate politician of the age, would have been accounted ignorant of the very first elements; and, instead of a hero, he would be looked on only as an inconsiderable Hotspur.

I cannot forbear pitying Europe, when I consider that the fate of its several nations, in some measure, depends on two ounces of lead, projected in a certain direction.

#### LETTER LXXIV.

*The Mandarin Ni-ou-san, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, at London.*

Lisbon.

**I**F private persons often undergo very hard trials, princes are likewise not exempt from distressful catastrophes.

I believe there never was a more unfortunate prince than Joseph the First, the present king of Portugal. It was as if some baneful noxious influence had been shed on the throne, at his taking possession of it. The first

news was an insurrection among the Brasil slaves: soon after, some public buildings, lately erected, were destroyed by a sudden fire: within a few years came on the dreadful earthquake, which swallowed up about forty thousand of his subjects; and he himself was for some days, like a destitute fugitive, without dominion, crown, or even home.

His palace, with all its immense riches, was consumed by the fire of the convulsive earth, if not rather that of heaven.

His capital was reduced to ashes, and what escaped the general conflagration, served only to heighten the idea of this destructive ravage.

This distressed prince saw his subjects roaming about, without shelter, and in the most extreme indigence, himself not able to afford them any relief, which to a father of his people, must have been an inexpressible aggravation of his own misery.

These afflictions, and at no long interval, were succeeded by a plot of some great men against him: their design was to murder him; and they made the attempt at the gates of his very capital, where he received a wound from a hand which he had honoured with his confidence.

The very punishment of this crime proved a fresh subject of regret. This unfortunate prince, in one day, saw most of the grandees of his kingdom put to death on a scaffold; a circumstance which greatly diminished the splendour of his court, and made his throne solitary.

Yet is this monarch affable, good-natured, mild, and benevolent. But, could it be thought? there is a certain degree of goodness in sovereigns, big with greater evils than the cruelty of tyrants: at least, the experience of all ages proves the greatest injuries to have been committed under good-natured princes.

Severity in monarchs keeps both ministers and subjects within their duty; and this is the standard of public order: the happiness of a people lies in its limits; all beyond it is tyranny, all short of it is

imbecillity. I could name two or three European princes, whose lenity is a misfortune to their people.

## LETTER LXXV.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi to the Mandarin Kie-tot-na, at Pekin.*

London.

**A**L the loud complaints about the excessive power of European kings, are now of no avail: reflection comes too late, the business is over, and despotism set led unalterably.

The political societies, originally instituted to protect the national rights, are overpowered by the prerogative; all their representations cannot look the royal will in the face. This extinction of the national immunities is of ancient date; it is not in the present, nor the preceding age, that it has been brought about: the absolute despotism of kings has been established gradually, though not imperceptibly.

The Christian princes, however, always jarring among themselves, are agreed in making all their subjects slaves.

On a retrospect of the very little power, with which kings were originally invested, one cannot forbear apprehending, that there must have been as much remissness in the people, as ambition in the princes.

Absolute despotism could never have been settled, had not the subjects of every state, if not concurred, acquiesced in such a wretched change: it was only keeping to the plan laid down by every legislator, and the equitable ballance had subsisted. After examining all the constitutions of Europe, I do not find one, in which despotism was deliberately established: all place a barrier between prerogative and servitude; but, on a depravation of principles, the sovereigns easily brought their subjects under the yoke.

Europe's misfortune is the greater, there being, at this present time, no constitution or form of government

ment to remedy it. Nothing less than a determined conspiracy against all monarchs in general, can reinstate the people in their original rights; a remedy worse than the disease; for the anarchy consequent to such a sudden revolution, would be productive of greater evils than any monarchical power, and infallibly destroy what despotism has spared.

After all, it would be only, if the expression be allowable, a licentious deviation of independency. Men are not formed for perpetual freedom; slavery seems to be their natural state: were not this debasement the destined lot of mankind. Athens, Carthage, and Rome, would be still subsisting; whereas ages have elapsed since their period.

A vigorous effort might recover the liberty of Europe: and what then? after some short interval of this independency, so ardently breathed after, it would again sink into the servitude now so much execrated.

Soon or late the most independent people suffer themselves to be loaded with chains.

Should the sticklers for liberty in England get the ascendancy, that republic might perhaps hold out two or three centuries, and afterwards its independency will be gradually swallowed up by despotism.

THE END.





